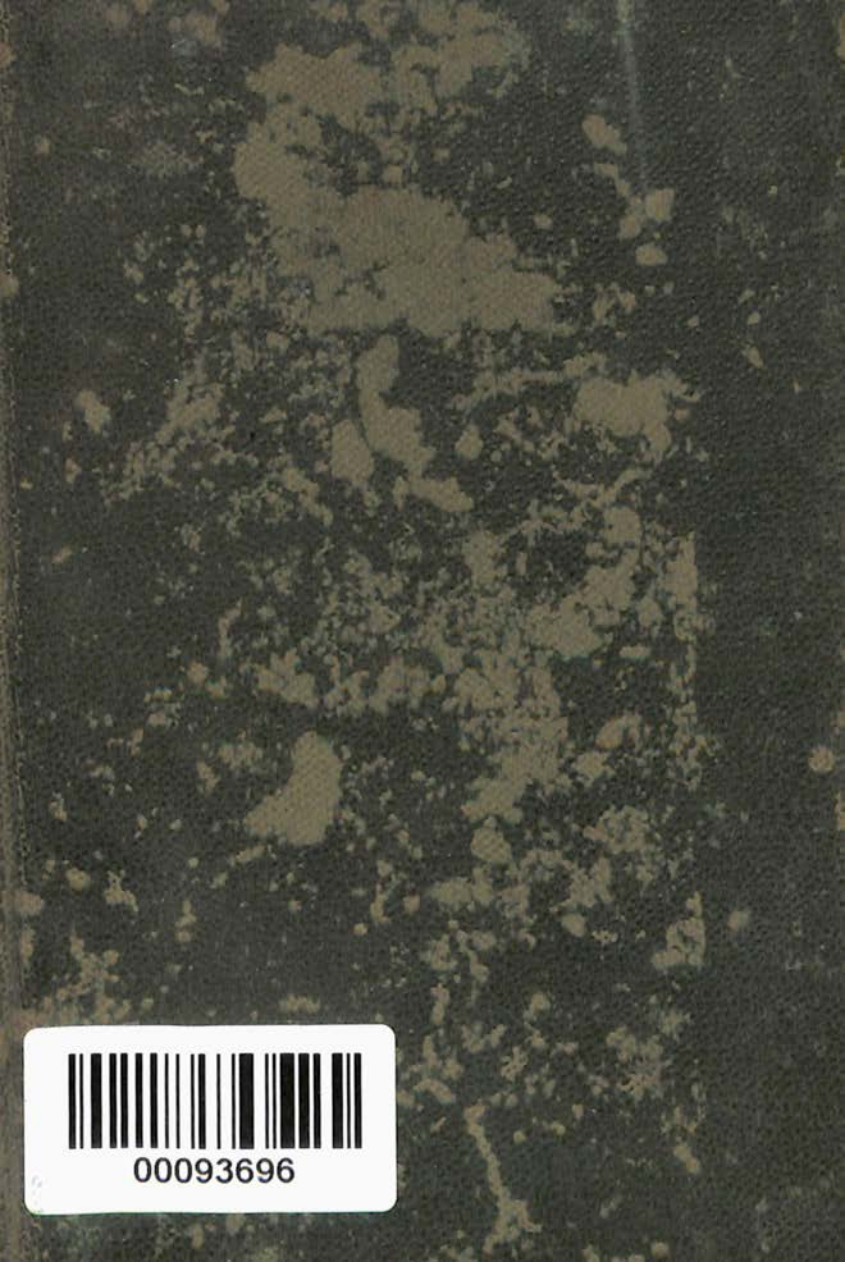
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SKETCHES:

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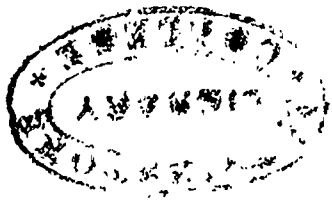
BY

THOMAS DE QUINCEY.

Vol. 6



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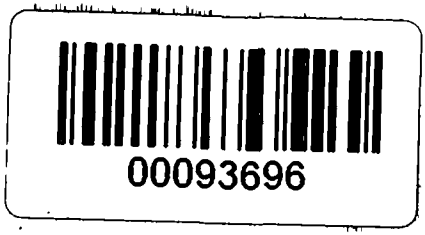

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PREFACE.

THREE out of the six papers here accidentally brought together —viz., that on Shelley, on Wordsworth, and on Keats—the reader is requested to regard as slight impromptus—written under the disadvantage, but therefore under the privilege, of unpremeditated composition. The circumstances of the case, so far from demanding a comprehensive view of the subject, were such as peremptorily to exclude it; and it became requisite, for a momentary purpose, out of many dazzling aspects crowning such themes, to fix the attention exclusively upon one or two. In the case of Keats, there is something which (after a lapse of several years) I could wish unsaid, or said more gently. It is the denunciation, much too harsh, and disproportioned to the offence, of Keats's licentiousness in the treatment of his mother-tongue: to which venerable mother-tongue Keats certainly *did* approach with too little reverence, and with a false notion of his rights over it as a material servile to his caprices. But the tone of complaint on *my* part was too vehement and unmeasured—though still (as I request the reader to observe)

not uttered until Keats had been dead for many years, and had notoriously left no representatives interested in his literary pretensions; which, besides, are able to protect themselves.

With regard to Wordsworth, what I chiefly regret is—that I could not, under the circumstances of the case, obtain room for pursuing further the great question (first moved controversially by Wordsworth) of *Poetic Diction.* It is remarkable enough, as illustrating the vapoury character of all that philosophy which Coleridge and Wordsworth professed to hold in common, that, after twenty years of close ostensible agreement, it turned out, when accident led them to a printed utterance of their several views, that not one vestige of true and virtual harmony existed to unite them. Between *Fancy*, for instance, and *Imagination*, they both agreed that a distinction, deep, practical, and vitally operative, had slept unnoticed for ages; that, first of all, in an early stage of this revolutionary nineteenth century, that distinction was descried upon the psychological field of vision by Wordsworth, or by Coleridge; but naturally the accurate demanded to know—by which. And to this no answer could ever be obtained. Finally, however, it transpired that any answer would be nugatory; since, on coming to distinct explanations upon the subject, in print, the two authorities flatly, and through the whole gamut of illustrative cases, contradicted each other. Precisely the same (or, at least, precisely an equal) agreement had originally existed between the two philosophic poets on the laws and quality of *Poetic Diction;* and there again, after many years of supposed pacific harmony, all at once precisely the same unfathomable chasm of chaotic schism opened between them. Chaos, however, is the natural prologue to Creation;

and although neither Coleridge nor Wordsworth has left anything written upon this subject, which does not tend seemingly to a barren result, nevertheless, there is still fermenting an unsatisfied doubt upon the question of the true and the false in poetic diction, which dates from the days of Euripides. What were the views of Euripides can now be gathered only from his practice; but from *that* (which was not unobserved by Valckenaer) I infer that he was secretly governed by the same feelings on this subject as Wordsworth. But between the two poets there was this difference: Euripides* was perhaps in a state of *unconscious* sympathy with the views subsequently held by Wordsworth, so that, except by his practice, he could not promote those views; but Wordsworth held them consciously and earnestly, and purely from Sybaritish indolence failed to illustrate them. Even Coleridge, though indulgent enough to such an infirmity, was a little scandalised at the excess of this morbid affection in Wordsworth. The old original illustrations—two, three, or perhaps three and a-quarter—cited from Gray and Prior; these—and absolutely not enlarged through a fifty years' additional experience—were all that Wordsworth put forward to the end of his life. Any decent measure of exertion would have easily added a crop of five thousand further cases. This excess of *inertia*, this (which the ancients would have called) *sacred* laziness, operating upon a favoured theory, is in itself a not uninteresting spectacle for a contemplative man. But a still stranger subject for cynical contemplation is, that, after

* That Euripides, consciously or not, had a secret craving for the natural and life-like in diction, is noticed by Valckenaer in his great dissertation upon the Phœnissæ.

all (as hereafter I believe it possible to show), Wordsworth has failed to establish his theory, not simply through morbid excesses of holy idleness, but also through entire misconception of his own meaning, and blind aberration from the road on which he fancied himself moving.

In the paper on Dr Parr, a careless reader may fancy that I, being a Tory, am illiberal enough to assume that Whiggism is in itself a matter of reproach. But in this he would be doing me great injustice; for it happens that I have placed on record my own peculiar views of the relation subsisting between the doctrine of the Tories and that of the Whigs; which views represent them as separately forming the two hemispheres which jointly compose the total truth. In a paper on that subject I contend that, when Charles Fox undertook a history of our English Revolution, with the purpose of glorifying the Whigs in contradistinction to the Tories, as the heroes of that great event, he made shipwreck of all political philosophy. The misconception was total. A Trinitarian, I there said by way of illustration, and an anti-Trinitarian cannot both be right: in such a case the affirmation of either is the negation of the other. But in very many cases this is far otherwise. The Whig and the Tory, for instance, are both right: and both equally right. Not only so, but the one is right only because (and so long as) the other is right. Singly, the Tory would be wrong. Singly, the Whig would be wrong. But taken jointly they compose that synthesis which realises and embodies the total constitutional truth. The Whig takes charge of the constitutional forces in one direction; the Tory in another. And it would be as absurd to invest either party with a superior function, as to imagine the centripetal force more important than the centrifugal in the planetary system

of motions. Were the Whig withdrawn, instantly the Tory would become a redundant and destructive power; and *vice versâ*. Both Whig and Tory shared *equally* in our Revolution. Meantime, not one act in a thousand, done or proposed by the Whig or Tory party, concerns them *as* Whigs or *as* Tories. For instance, to each of these parties at different periods foreign politics have presented a ruinous snare. During the four last years of Queen Anne, the Tories played the most treasonable part. That was early in the eighteenth century. Almost in the corresponding years of the nineteenth century, the very same false and treacherous part was played by the Whigs; but in this respect more criminally by far, inasmuch as the danger was incomparably greater from 1803 to 1812, than from 1703 to 1712. The enemy at whose feet the Whigs would have laid us prostrate from 1807 to 1815, was Napoleon, with a servile Europe at his back: whereas, in the corresponding case of the preceding century, the enemy was Louis XIV., menaced by a growing confederacy of our allies.

The reader understands, therefore, that I do not (and could not consistently) disparage or anywhere condemn Dr Parr *as* a Whig. Those acts which reflect shame and reproach upon his character and the claims of his clerical profession, had no connection with Whig principles: very often they were acts discountenanced, or at the least *not* countenanced by his own political party. But, in those rarer cases where the acts really *had* such a partisan countenance, the party concerned in the first place was, not the Whigs as opposed to the Tories, but the *Outs* as opposed to the *Ins*. It was with no reference to their party creed that Messrs Fox, Grey, Tierney, Sheridan, &c., oftentimes lent their support to Dr Parr: not at all; it was simply as the party in *opposition* (whether Whigs or Tories),

pulling an oar against the party in *office:* pledging, therefore, no principles whatever in Dr Parr's behalf, but simply weight of influence. Finally, in those very rare cases where the Whig party *as* Whigs avowed their patronage to an act or to a book of Dr Parr's, there was still room left for this objection—that it was the act of a schismatical Whig party; of one section dividing against the other, and leaving it doubtful which was the true depositary of Whiggism, which the spurious.

The article on Goldsmith was one which, on any spontaneous impulse, I should not have written, as I could not write on that theme with sincere cordiality or with perfect charity; consequently not with perfect freedom of thought.

Do I then question the true and unaffected merit of Goldsmith, in that natural field upon which his happy genius gave him a right to succeed? Not at all. Within a humble province the genius of Goldsmith seems to me exquisite. Especially his "Vicar of Wakefield" in its earlier part—*i. e.*, in its delineation of the vicar's simple household, when contemplated through the eyes of the vicar himself, unconscious of the effect from his own peculiar mode of delightful egotism—has always struck me as inimitable; not so, I confess, in the coarser scenes of the latter half. But, for my own part, I had always borne a grudge to Goldsmith on behalf of Shakspere, whom so deeply and so deliberately he had presumed to insult; once in a travelling scene of the "Vicar," but once also in a mode less casual and indirect. None of us would make it a reproach to a slight and graceful champion that he had not the powers for facing a Jupiter: but, if he himself insisted on affronting this Olympian antagonist, he must not complain that the consequences were defeat to himself, and disgust spreading widely through the circles of those that otherwise would have been his friends.

My little paper took the shape of a critique upon Mr Forster's elaborate and splendid review of Goldsmith's life and literary career. To Mr Forster I owe a large apology for having so inadequately reported the character and qualities of his "Vindiciæ Oliverianæ." This failure was due to a deep-seated nervous derangement, under which at that time, and for years previously, I had been suffering. But neither ill health, nor resentment in the interest of the insulted Shakspere, was suffered for a moment to colour the expression of my respectful gratitude to Goldsmith. Yet some readers will say, would it not have been better frankly to explain the ground of my secret irritation? No: because the express purpose of Mr Forster's book had been to offer a homage of retribution to the injured memory of Goldsmith; and I, sympathising on deep grounds of justice and rightful indignation with that honourable purpose, assumed, as it were, on behalf of our common sentiment, the character of a judicial advocate, or even, for the moment, of a eulogist. I, adopting in the main, as a junior counsel, the views and feelings of my leader, was not at liberty in that situation to break the continuity of the potent reaction on behalf of Goldsmith, which Mr Forster's earnest researches were fitted to evoke. I was not at liberty to disturb by any murmur of dissent the reader's fraternal sympathy with the general movement.

In the closing paper *(On Homer and the Homeridæ)*, it will be observed that I have uniformly assumed the chronologic date of Homer as 1000 years B.C. Among the reasons for this, some are so transcendent, that it would not have been worth while to detain the reader upon minute grounds of approximation to that date. One ground is sufficient: Lycurgus, the Spartan lawgiver, seems accurately placed about 800 years

B.C. Now, if at that era Lycurgus naturalises the "Iliad" as a great educational power in Sparta (led to this, no doubt, by gratitude for Homer's glorification of so many cities in the Peloponnesus), then—because one main reason for this must have been the venerable antiquity of Homer—it is impossible to assign him less *at that time* than 200 years of duration. An antiquity that was already venerable in the year 800 B.C., would argue, at the very least, a natal origin for the poet (if not for the poem) of 1000 B.C.

A second explanation is due to the reader upon another point: I have repeatedly spoken of "*publication*" as an incident to which literary works were, or might be, liable in the times of Solon and Pisistratus; that is, in times that ranged between 500 and 600 years B.C. But, as very many readers—especially female readers—make no distinction between the act of *printing* and the act of *publication*, there are few who will not be perplexed by this form of expression, as supposing that neither one nor the other was an advantage physically open in those days to any author whatever. Printing, it is true, was not; but for a very different reason from that ordinarily assigned—viz., that it had not been discovered. It *had* been discovered many times over; and many times forgotten. Paper it was, cheap paper (as many writers have noticed), that had not been discovered; which failing, the other discovery fell back constantly into oblivion. This want forced the art of printing to slumber for pretty nearly the *exact* period of 2000 years from the era of Pisistratus. But that want did not affect the power of publication. Æschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, Aristophanes, Menander, were all published, to the extent of many modern editions, on the majestic stage of Athens; published to myriads in one day; published

with advantages of life-like action, noble enunciation, and impassioned music. No modern author, except Thomas à Kempis, has ever been half so well published. The Greek orators on the *Bema* were published to more than all the citizens of Athens. And some 2000 and odd years later, in regal London, at Whitehall, the dramas of Shakspere were published effectually to two consecutive Princes of Wales, Henry and Charles, with royal apparatus of scenery and music.

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

THERE is no writer named amongst men, of whom, so much as of Percy Bysshe Shelley, it is difficult for a conscientious critic to speak with the profound respect, on the one hand, due to his exalted powers, and yet without offence, on the other, to feelings the most sacred, which too memorably he outraged. The indignation which this powerful young writer provoked had its root in no personal feelings—those might have been conciliated; in no worldly feelings—those would have proved transitory; but in feelings the holiest which brood over human interests, and which guard the sanctuary of religious truth. Consequently, which is a melancholy thought for any friend of Shelley's, the indignation is likely to be co-extensive and co-enduring with the writings that provoked it. That bitterness of scorn and defiance which still burns against his name in the most extensively meditative section of English society—viz., the religious section—is not of a nature to be propitiated. Selfish interests, being wounded, might be compensated; merely human interests might be soothed; but interests that transcend all human

valuation, being *so* insulted, must upon principle reject all human ransom or conditions of human compromise. Less than penitential recantation could not be accepted; and *that* is now impossible. "Will ye *transact** with God?" is the indignant language of Milton in a case of that nature. And in this case the language of many pious men said aloud—"It is for God to forgive; but we, his servants, are bound to recollect, that this young man offered to Christ and to Christianity the deepest insult which ear has heard, or which it has entered into the heart of man to conceive." Others, as in Germany, had charged Christ with committing suicide, on the principle that he who tempts or solicits death by doctrines fitted to provoke that result, is virtually the causer of his own destruction. But in this sense every man commits suicide, who will not betray an interest confided to his keeping under menaces of death; the martyr, who perishes for

* "*Transact:*"—This word, used in this Roman sense, illustrates the particular mode of Milton's liberties with the English language—liberties which have never yet been properly examined, collated, numbered, or appreciated. In the Roman law, *transigere* expressed the case (as the French word *transiger* still does) where each of two conflicting parties conceded something of what originally he had claimed as the rigour of his right; and *transactio* was the technical name for a legal compromise. Milton has here introduced no new word into the English language, but has given a new and more learned sense to an old one. Sometimes, it is true, as in the word *sensuous*, he introduces a pure coinage of his own, and a most useful coinage; but generally to re-endow an old foundation is the extent of his innovations. M. De Tocqueville is therefore likely to be found wrong in saying that "Milton alone introduced more than six hundred words into the English language, almost all derived from the Latin, the Greek, or the Hebrew." The passage occurs in the 16th chapter of his "Democracy in America," Part ii., where M. De Tocqueville is discussing the separate agencies through which democratic life on the one hand, or aristocratic life on the other, affects the changes of language. His English translator, Mr H. Reeve, an able and philosophic annotator, justly views this bold assertion as "startling, and probably erroneous."

truth, when by deserting it he might live; the patriot, who perishes for his country, when by betraying it he might win riches and honour. And, were this even otherwise, the objection would be nothing to Christians, who, recognising the Deity in Christ, recognise his unlimited right over life. Some, again, had pointed their insults at a part more vital in Christianity, if it had happened to be as vulnerable as they fancied. The new doctrine, introduced by Christ, of forgiveness to those who injure or who hate us, —on what footing was it placed? Once, at least in appearance, on the idea, that by assisting or forgiving an enemy we should be eventually "heaping coals of fire upon his head." Mr Howdon, in a very clever book ("Rational Investigation of the Principles of Natural Philosophy"), calls this "a fiendish idea:" and I acknowledge that to myself, in one part of my boyhood, it *did* seem a refinement of malice. My subtilising habits, however, even in those days, soon suggested to me that this aggravation of guilt in the object of our forgiveness was not held out as the motive to the forgiveness, but simply as the result of it—an undesigned result; secondly, that perhaps no aggravation of his guilt was the point contemplated, but the salutary stinging into life of his remorse, hitherto sleeping; thirdly, that every doubtful or perplexing expression must be overruled and determined by the prevailing spirit of the system in which it stands. If Mr Howdon's sense were the true one, then this passage would be in pointed hostility to every other part of the Christian ethics.*

* Since the boyish period in which these redressing corrections occurred to me, I have seen some reason (upon considering the oriental practice of placing live coals in a pan upon the head, and its meaning as still in use amongst the Turks) to alter the whole interpretation of the passage.

These were affronts to the Founder of Christianity, offered too much in the temper of malignity. But Shelley's was worse; more bitter, and with less of countenance, even in show or shadow, from any fact, or insinuation of a fact, that Scripture suggests. In his "Queen Mab" he gives a dreadful portrait of God; and that no question may arise, of *what* God, he names him: it is Jehovah. He asserts his existence; he affirms him to be "an almighty God, and vengeful as almighty." He goes on to describe him as the "omnipotent fiend," who found "none but slaves" (Israel in Egypt, no doubt) to be "his tools," and none but "a murderer" (Moses, I presume) "to be his accomplice in crime." He introduces this dreadful Almighty as speaking, and as speaking thus—

> "From an eternity of idleness
> I, God, awoke; in seven days' toil made earth
> From nothing; rested; and created man."

But man he hates, and he goes on to curse him; till at the intercession of "the murderer," who is electrified into pity for the human race by the very horror of the divine curses, God promises to send his Son—only, however, for the benefit of a few. This Son appears; the poet tells us that

> "The Incarnate came; humbly he came,
> Veiling his horrible Godhead in the shape
> Of man, scorn'd by the world, his name unheard
> Save by the rabble of his native town."

The poet pursues this incarnate God as a teacher of men; teaching, "in semblance," justice, truth, and peace; but underneath all this, kindling "quenchless flames," which eventually were destined

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It would too much interrupt the tenor of the subject to explain this at length; but, if right, it would equally harmonise with the spirit of Christian morals.

"To satiate, with the blood
Of truth and freedom, his malignant soul."

He follows him to his crucifixion, and describes him, whilst hanging on the cross, as shedding malice upon a reviler—*malice on the cross!*

"A smile of godlike malice re-illumined
His fading lineaments;"

and his parting breath is uttered in a memorable curse.

This atrocious picture of the Deity, in his dealings with man, both pre-Christian and post-Christian, is certainly placed in the mouth of the Wandering Jew; but the internal evidence, as well as collateral evidence from without, make it clear that the Jew (whose version of scriptural records nobody in the poem disputes) here represents the person of the poet. Shelley had opened his career as an atheist, and as a proselytising atheist. But in those days he was a boy. At the date of "Queen Mab" he was a young man. And we now find him advanced from the station of an atheist to the more intellectual one of a believer in God and in the mission of Christ, but of one who fancies himself called upon to defy and to hate both, in so far as they have revealed their relations to man.

Mr Gilfillan* thinks that "*Shelley was far too harshly treated in his speculative boyhood;*" and it strikes him "*that, had pity and kind-hearted expostulation been tried, instead of reproach and abrupt expulsion, they might have weaned him from the dry dugs of Atheism to the milky breast of the faith and 'worship of sorrow;' and the touching spectacle had been renewed, of the demoniac sitting, 'clothed, and in his right mind,' at the feet of Jesus.*" I am not of that opinion; and it is an opinion which seems to question the *sincerity* of Shelley, that quality which in him was deepest, so as to

* "Gallery of Literary Portraits."

form the basis of his nature, if we allow ourselves to think that, by personal irritation, he had been piqued into infidelity, or that by flattering conciliation he could have been bribed back into a profession of Christianity. Like a wild horse of the Pampas, he would have thrown up his heels, and *whinnied* his disdain of any man coming to catch *him* with a bribe of oats. Once having scented the gales of what he thought perfect freedom, he had a constant vision of a manger and a halter in the rear of all such caressing tempters from the lawless desert. His feud with Christianity was a craze derived from some early wrench of his understanding, and made obstinate to the degree in which we find it, from having rooted itself in certain combinations of ideas that, once coalescing, could not be shaken loose; such as, that Christianity underpropped the corruptions of the earth, in the shape of wicked governments that might else have been overthrown, or of wicked priesthoods that, but for the shelter of shadowy and spiritual terrors, must have trembled before those whom they overawed. Kings that were clothed in bloody robes; dark hierarchies that scowled upon the poor children of the soil—these objects took up a permanent station in the background of Shelley's imagination, not to be dispossessed more than the phantom of Banquo from the festival of Macbeth, and composed a towering Babylon of mystery that, to *his* belief, could not have flourished under any umbrage less vast than that of Christianity. Such was the inextricable association of images that domineered over Shelley's mind: such was the hatred which he built upon that association—an association casual and capricious, yet fixed and petrified as if by frost. Can we imagine the case of an angel touched by lunacy? Have we ever seen the spectacle of a human intellect, exquisite by its functions of creation, yet in one

chamber of its shadowy house already ruined before the light of manhood had cleansed its darkness? Such an angel, such a man—if ever such there were—such a lunatic angel, such a ruined man, was Shelley, whilst yet standing on the earliest threshold of life.

Mr Gilfillan, whose eye is quick to seize the lurking and the stealthy aspect of things, does not overlook the absolute midsummer madness which possessed Shelley upon the subject of Christianity. Shelley's total nature was altered and darkened when that theme arose: transfiguration fell upon him. He that was so gentle, became savage; he that breathed by the very lungs of Christianity —that was so merciful, so full of tenderness and pity, of humility, of love, and forgiveness—then raved and screamed like an idiot whom once I personally knew, when offended by a strain of heavenly music at the full of the moon. In both cases, it was the sense of perfect beauty revealed under the sense of morbid estrangement. This it is, as I presume, which Mr Gilfillan alludes to in the following passage:—"On all *other* subjects the wisest of the wise, the gentlest of the gentle, the bravest of the brave, yet, when *one* topic was introduced, he became straightway insane; his eyes glared, his voice screamed, his hand vibrated frenzy." But Mr Gilfillan is probably in the wrong when he countenances the notion that harsh treatment had any concern in riveting the fanaticism of Shelley. On the contrary, he met with an indulgence to the first manifestation of his Antichristian madness, better suited to the goodness of the lunatic than to the pestilence of his lunacy. It was at Oxford that this earliest explosion of Shelleyism occurred; and though, with respect to secrets of prison-houses, and to discussions that proceed "with closed doors," there is always a danger of being misin-

formed, I believe, from the uniformity of such accounts as have reached myself, that the following *brief* of the matter may be relied on. Shelley, being a venerable sage of sixteen, or rather less, came to a resolution that he would convert, and that it was his solemn duty to convert, the universal Christian church to Atheism or to Pantheism, no great matter *which*. But, as such large undertakings require time, twenty months, suppose, or even two years—for you know, reader, that a railway requires on an average little less—Shelley was determined to obey no impulse of youthful rashness. Oh no! Down with presumption, down with levity, down with boyish precipitation! Changes of religion are awful things: people must have time to think. He would move slowly and discreetly. So first he wrote a pamphlet, clearly and satisfactorily explaining the necessity of being an atheist; and, with his usual exemplary courage (for, seriously, he was the least *false* of human creatures), Shelley put his name to the pamphlet, and the name of his college. His ultimate object was to accomplish a general apostasy in the Christian church of whatever name. But for one six months, it was quite enough if he caused a revolt in the Church of England. And as, before a great naval action, when the enemy is approaching, you throw a long shot or two by way of trying his range—on that principle Shelley had thrown out his tract in Oxford. Oxford formed the advanced squadron of the English Church; and, by way of a *coup d'essai*, though in itself a bagatelle, what if he should begin with converting Oxford? To make any beginning at all is one-half the battle. To speak seriously, there is something even thus far in the boyish presumption of Shelley not altogether without nobility. He affronted the armies of Christendom. Had it been possible for *him* to be jest-

ing, it would *not* have been noble. But here, even in the most monstrous of his undertakings—here, as always, he was perfectly sincere and single-minded. Satisfied that Atheism was the sheet-anchor of the world, he was not the person to speak by halves. Being a boy, he attacked those (upon a point the most sure to irritate) who were grey; having no station in society, he flew at the throats of none but those who *had;* weaker than an infant for the purpose before him, he planted his fist in the face of a giant, saying, "Take *that*, you devil, and *that*, and *that*." The pamphlet had been published; and though an under-graduate of Oxford is not (technically speaking) a member of the university as a responsible corporation, still he bears a near relation to it. And the heads of colleges felt a disagreeable summons to an extra meeting. There are in Oxford somewhere about five-and-twenty colleges and halls. Frequent and full the heads assembled in Golgotha, a well-known Oxonian chamber, which, being interpreted (as scripturally we know), is "the place of a skull," and must, therefore, naturally be the place of a head. There the heads met to deliberate. What was to be done? Most of them were inclined to mercy: to proceed at all, was to proceed to extremities; and (generally speaking) to expel a man from Oxford, is to ruin his prospects in an[illegible] the liberal professions. Not, therefore, from con[illegible]eration for Shelley's position in society, but on the k[illegible]dest motives of forbearance towards one so young, the heads decided for declining all notice of the pamphlet. Levelled *at* them, it was not specially addressed *to* them; and, amongst the infinite children born every morning from that mightiest of mothers, the Press, why should Golgotha be supposed to have known anything, officially, of this little brat? That evasion might suit some

people, but not Percy Bysshe Shelley. There was a flaw (was there?) in his process; his pleading could not, regularly, come up before the court. Very well—he would heal that defect immediately. So he sent his pamphlet, with five-and-twenty separate letters, addressed to the five-and-twenty heads of colleges in Golgotha assembled; courteously "inviting" all and every of them to notify, at his earliest convenience, his adhesion to the enclosed unanswerable arguments for Atheism. Upon this, it is undeniable that Golgotha looked black; and, after certain formalities, "invited" P. B. Shelley to consider himself expelled from the University of Oxford. But, if this were harsh, how would Mr Gilfillan have had them to proceed? Already they had done, perhaps, too much in the way of forbearance. There were many men in Oxford who knew the standing of Shelley's family. Already it was whispered that any man of obscure connections would have been visited for his Atheism, whether writing to Golgotha or not. And this whisper would have strengthened, had any further neglect been shown to formal letters, which requested a formal answer. The authorities of Oxford, deeply responsible to the nation in a matter of so much peril, could not have acted otherwise than they did. They were not severe. The severity was *extorted* and imposed by Shelley. But, on the other hand, in some palliation of Shelley's conduct, it ought to be noticed that he is unfairly placed, by the undistinguishing, on the manly station of an ordinary Oxford student. The under-graduates of Oxford and Cambridge are not "boys," as a considerable proportion must be, for good reasons, in other universities —the Scottish universities, for instance, of Glasgow and St Andrews, and many of those on the Continent. Few of the English students even *begin* their residence before

eighteen; and the larger proportion are at least twenty. Whereas Shelley was *really* a boy at this era, and no man. He had entered on his sixteenth year, and he was still in the earliest part of his academic career, when his obstinate and reiterated attempt to inoculate the university with a disease that he fancied indispensable to their mental health, caused his expulsion.

I imagine that Mr Gilfillan will find himself compelled, hereafter, not less by his own second thoughts, than by the murmurs of some amongst his readers, to revise that selection of memorial traits, whether acts or habits, by which he seeks to bring Shelley, as a familiar presence, within the field of ocular apprehension. The acts selected, unless characteristic—the habits selected, unless representative—must be absolutely impertinent to the true identification of the man; and most of those rehearsed by Mr Gilfillan, unless where they happen to be merely accidents of bodily constitution, are such as all of us would be sorry to suppose naturally belonging to Shelley. To "rush out of the room in terror, as his wild imagination painted to him a pair of eyes in a lady's breast," is not so much a movement of poetic frenzy as of typhus fever—to "terrify an old lady out of her wits," by assuming, in a stage-coach, the situation of a regal sufferer from Shakspere, is not eccentricity so much as painful discourtesy—and to request of Rowland Hill, a man most pious and sincere, "the use of Surrey Chapel" as a theatre for publishing infidelity, would have been so thoroughly the act of a heartless coxcomb, that I, for one, cannot bring myself to believe it an authentic anecdote. Not that I doubt of Shelley's violating at times his own better nature, as every man is capable of doing, under youth too fervid, wine too potent, and companions too misleading; but it strikes me

that, during Shelley's very earliest youth, the mere accident of Rowland Hill's being a man well born and aristocratically connected, yet sacrificing these advantages to what he thought the highest of services—spiritual service on behalf of poor labouring men—would have laid a pathetic arrest upon any impulse of fun in one who, with the very same advantages of birth and position, had the same deep reverence for the rights of the poor. Willing, at all times, to forget his own pretensions in the presence of those who seemed powerless—willing in a degree that was almost sublime—Shelley could not but have honoured the same nobility of feeling in another. And Rowland Hill, by his guileless simplicity, had a separate hold upon a nature so childlike as Shelley's. He was full of love to man; so was Shelley. He was full of humility; so was Shelley. Difference of creed, however vast the interval which it created between the men, could not have hid from Shelley's eye the close approximation of their natures. Infidel by his intellect, Shelley was a Christian in the tendencies of his heart. As to his "lying asleep on the hearth-rug, with his small round head thrust almost into the very fire," this, like his "basking in the hottest beams of an Italian sun," illustrates nothing but his physical temperament. That he should be seen "devouring large pieces of bread amid his profound abstractions," simply recalls to my eye some hundred thousands of children in the streets of great cities, Edinburgh, Glasgow, London, whom I am daily detecting in the same unaccountable practice; and yet, probably, with very little abstraction to excuse it; whilst his "endless cups of tea," in so tea-drinking a land as ours, have really ceased to offer the attractions of novelty which, eighty years ago, in the reign of Dr Johnson, and under a higher price of tea, they might have secured. Such habits,

however, are inoffensive, if not particularly mysterious, nor particularly significant. But that, in default of a paper boat, Shelley should launch upon the Serpentine a fifty-pound bank-note, seems to my view an act of childishness, or else (which is worse) an act of empty ostentation, not likely to proceed from one who generally exhibited in his outward deportment a sense of true dignity. He who, through his family,* stood related to that "spirit without spot" (as Shelley calls him in the "Adonais"), Sir Philip Sidney! (a man how like in gentleness, and in faculties of mind, to himself)—he that, by consequence, connected himself with the later descendant of Penshurst, the noble martyr of freedom, Algernon Sidney, could not have degraded himself by a pride so mean as any which roots itself in wealth. On the other hand, in the anecdote of his repeating Dr Johnson's benign act, by "lifting a poor houseless outcast upon his back, and carrying her to a place of refuge," I read so strong a character of internal probability, that it would be gratifying to know upon what external testimony it rests.

The life of Shelley, according to the remark of Mr Gilfillan, was "among the most romantic in literary story." Everything was romantic in his short career; everything wore a tragic interest. From his childhood he moved through a succession of afflictions. Always craving for love, loving and seeking to be loved, always he was destined to reap hatred from those with whom life had connected him. If in the darkness he raised up images of his departed hours,

* "*Family:*"—*i. e.*, the *gens* in the Roman sense, or collective house. Shelley's own immediate branch of the house did not, in a legal sense, represent the family of Penshurst, because the *rights* of the lineal descent had settled upon another branch. But *his* branch had a collateral participation in the glory of the Sidney name, and might, by accidents possible enough, have come to be its sole representative.

he would behold his family disowning him, and the home of his infancy knowing him no more; he would behold his magnificent university, that under happier circumstances would have gloried in his genius, rejecting him for ever; he would behold his first wife, whom once he had loved passionately, through calamities arising from himself, called away to an early and a tragic death. The peace after which his heart panted for ever, in what dreadful contrast it stood to the eternal contention upon which his restless intellect or accidents of position threw him like a passive victim! It seemed as if not any choice of his, but some sad doom of opposition from without, forced out as by a magnet struggles of frantic resistance from *him*, which as gladly he would have evaded, as ever victim of epilepsy yearned to evade his convulsions! Gladly he would have slept in eternal seclusion, whilst eternally the trumpet summoned him to battle. In storms unwillingly created by himself he lived; in a storm cited by the finger of God he died.

It is affecting—at least it is so for any one who believes in the profound sincerity of Shelley, a man (however erring) whom neither fear, nor hope, nor vanity, nor hatred, ever seduced into falsehood, or even into dissimulation—to read the account which he gives of a revolution occurring in his own mind at school: so early did his struggles begin! It is in verse, and forms part of those beautiful stanzas addressed to his second wife, which he prefixed to "The Revolt of Islam." Five or six of these stanzas may be quoted with a certainty of pleasing many readers, whilst they throw light on the early condition of Shelley's feelings, and of his early anticipations with regard to the promises and the menaces of life.

> "Thoughts of great deeds were mine, dear friend, when first
> The clouds which wrap this world from youth did pass.

I do remember well the hour which burst
My spirit's sleep; a fresh May-dawn it was,
When I walk'd forth upon the glittering grass,
And wept—I knew not why, until there rose,
From the near school-room, voices that, alas!
Were but one echo from a world of woes—
The harsh and grating strife of tyrants and of foes.

And then I clasp'd my hands, and look'd around
(But none was near to mock my streaming eyes,
Which pour'd their warm drops on the sunny ground),
So without shame I spake—I will be wise,
And just, and free, and mild, if in me lies
Such power: for I grow weary to behold
The selfish and the strong still tyrannise
Without reproach or check. I then controll'd
My tears; my heart grew calm; and I was meek and bold.

And from that hour did I with earnest thought
Heap knowledge from forbidden mines of lore:
Yet nothing that my tyrants knew or taught
I cared to learn; but from that secret store
Wrought linkëd armour for my soul, before
It might walk forth to war among mankind:
Thus power and hope were strengthen'd more and more
Within me, till there came upon my mind
A sense of loneliness, a thirst with which I pined.

Alas, that love should be a blight and snare
To those who seek all sympathies in one!—
Such once I sought in vain; then black despair,
The shadow of a starless night, was thrown
Over the world in which I moved alone:—
Yet never found I one not false to me,
Hard hearts and cold, like weights of icy stone
Which crush'd and wither'd mine, that could not be
Aught but a lifeless clog, until revived by thee.

Thou, friend, whose presence on my wintry heart
Fell like bright spring upon some herbless plain;
How beautiful, and calm, and free thou wert,
In thy young wisdom, when the mortal chain
Of Custom* thou didst burst and rend in twain,

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* "*Of Custom*."—This alludes to a theory of Shelley's, on the subject of marriage as a vicious institution, and an attempt to realise his theory by way of public example; which attempt there is no use in noticing more particularly, as it was subsequently abandoned. Originally he had

And walk'd as free as light the clouds among,
Which many an envious slave then breathed in vain
From his dim dungeon, and my spirit sprung
To meet thee from the woes which had begirt it long.

No more alone through the world's wilderness,
Although I trod the paths of high intent,
I journey'd now: no more companionless,
Where solitude is like despair, I went.

* * * * *

Now has descended a serener hour;
And, with inconstant fortune, friends return:
Though suffering leaves the knowledge and the power
Which says—Let scorn be not repaid with scorn.
And from thy side two gentle babes are born,
To fill our home with smiles; and thus are we
Most fortunate beneath life's beaming morn;
And these delights and thou have been to me
The parents of the song I consecrate to thee."

My own attention was first drawn to Shelley by the report of his Oxford labours as a missionary in the service of Atheism. Abstracted from the absolute sincerity and simplicity which governed that boyish movement, qualities which could not be known to a stranger, or even suspected in the midst of so much extravagance, there was nothing in the Oxford reports of him to create any interest, beyond that of wonder at his folly and presumption in pushing to such extremity what, naturally, all people viewed as an elaborate jest. Some curiosity, however, even at that time, must have gathered about his name; for I remember seeing in London a little Indian-ink sketch of him in the academic costume of Oxford. The sketch tallied pretty

derived his theory from the writings of Mary Wolstonecraft, the mother of his second wife, whose birth in fact had cost that mother her life. But by the year 1812 (the year following his first marriage), he had so fortified, from other quarters, his previous opinions upon the wickedness of all nuptial ties consecrated by law or by the church, that he apologised to his friends for having submitted to the marriage ceremony as for an offence; but an offence, he pleaded, rendered necessary, by the vicious constitution of society, for the comfort of his female partner.

well with a verbal description which I had heard of him in some company—viz., that he was rather tall, slender, and presenting the air of an elegant flower, whose head drooped from being surcharged with rain. This gave to the chance observer an impression that he was tainted, even in his external deportment, by some excess of sickly sentimentalism, from which, however, in all stages of his life, he was remarkably free. Between two and three years after this period, which was that of his expulsion from Oxford, he married a beautiful girl named Westbrook. She was respectably connected, but had not moved in a rank corresponding to Shelley's; and that accident brought him into my own neighbourhood; for his family, already estranged from him, were now thoroughly irritated by what they regarded as a *mesalliance*, and withdrew, or greatly reduced, his pecuniary allowances. Such, at least, was the story current. In this embarrassment, his wife's father made over to him an annual income of £200; and, as economy had become important, the youthful pair—both, in fact, still children—came down to the Lakes, supposing this region of Cumberland and Westmoreland to be a sequestered place, which it *was*, for eight months in the year, and also to be a cheap place, which it was *not*. Another motive to this choice arose with the then Duke of Norfolk. He was an old friend of Shelley's family, and generously refused to hear a word of the young man's errors, except where he could do anything to relieve him from their consequences. His grace possessed the beautiful estate of Gobarrow Park, on Ullswater, and other estates of greater extent in the same two counties;* his

*"*Two counties:*"—The frontier line between Westmoreland and Cumberland traverses obliquely the Lake of Ullswater, so that the banks on *each* side lie partly in both counties.

own agents he had directed to furnish any accommodations that might meet Shelley's views; and he had written to some gentlemen amongst his agricultural friends in Cumberland, requesting them to pay such neighbourly attentions to the solitary young people as circumstances might place in their power. This bias, being impressed upon Shelley's wanderings, naturally brought him to Keswick, as the most central and the largest of the little towns dispersed amongst the Lakes. Southey, made aware of the interest taken in Shelley by the Duke of Norfolk, with his usual kindness, immediately called upon him; and the ladies of Southey's family subsequently made an early call upon Mrs Shelley. One of them mentioned to me, as occurring in this first visit, an amusing expression of the youthful matron, which, four years later, when I heard of her gloomy end, recalled, with the force of a pathetic contrast, that icy arrest then chaining up her youthful feet for ever. The Shelleys had been induced by one of their new friends to take part of a house standing about half-a-mile out of Keswick, on the Penrith road; more, I believe, according to that friend's intention, for the sake of bringing them within his own hospitalities, than for any beauty in the place. There was, however, a pretty garden attached to it; and, whilst walking in this, one of the Southey party asked Mrs Shelley if the garden had been let with *their* part of the house. "Oh no," she replied, "the garden is not ours; but then, you know, the people let us run about in it, whenever Percy and I are tired of sitting in the house." The *naïveté* of this expression, "run about," contrasting so picturesquely with the intermitting efforts of the girlish wife at supporting a matron-like gravity, now that she was doing the honours of her house to married ladies, caused all the party to smile. And *me* it

caused profoundly to sigh, four years later, when the gloomy death of this young creature, now frozen in a distant grave, threw back my remembrance upon her fawn-like playfulness, which, unconsciously to herself, the girlish phrase of *run about* so naturally betrayed.

At that time, I had a cottage myself in Grasmere, just thirteen miles distant from Shelley's new abode. As he had then written nothing of any interest, I had no motive for calling upon him, except by way of showing any little attentions in my power to a brother Oxonian, and to a man of letters. These attentions, indeed, he might have claimed simply in the character of a neighbour; for as men living on the coast of Mayo or Galway are apt to consider the dwellers on the sea-board of North America in the light of next-door neighbours, divided only by a party-wall of crystal—and what if accidentally three thousand miles thick!—on the same principle, we amongst the slender population of this lake region, and wherever no ascent intervened between two parties higher than Dunmail Raise and the spurs of Helvellyn, were apt to take with each other the privileged tone of neighbours. Some neighbourly advantages I might certainly have placed at Shelley's disposal—Grasmere, for instance, itself, which tempted at that time* by a beauty that had not *then* been

* "*At that time,*" the reader will say, who happens to be aware of the mighty barriers which engirdle Grasmere; viz., Fairfield, Arthur's Chair, Seat Sandal, Steil Fell, &c. (the lowest above two thousand, the higher above *three* thousand feet high)—"what then? Do the mountains change, and the mountain tarns?" Perhaps not; but, if they do not change in substance or in form, they "change countenance" when they are disfigured from below. One cotton-mill, planted by the side of a torrent, disenchants the scene, and banishes the ideal beauty, even in the case where it leaves the physical beauty untouched: a truth which, many years ago, I saw illustrated in the little hamlet of Church Coniston. But is there any cotton-mill in Grasmere? Not that I have heard;

sullied; Wordsworth, who then lived in Grasmere; Elleray and Professor Wilson, nine miles further; finally, my own library, which, being rich in the wickedest of German speculations, would naturally have been more to Shelley's taste than the Spanish library of Southey.

But all these temptations were negatived for Shelley by his sudden departure. Off he went in a hurry: but *why* he went, or *whither* he went, I did not inquire; not guessing the interest which he would create in my mind, six years later, by his "Revolt of Islam." A life of Shelley, in a continental edition of his works, says that he went to

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but if no water has been filched away from Grasmere, there is one water too much which has crept lately into that loveliest of mountain chambers; and *that* is the "water-cure," which has built unto itself a sort of residence in that vale; whether a rustic nest, or a lordly palace, I do not know. Meantime, in honesty it must be owned, that many years ago the vale was half ruined by an insane substruction carried along the eastern margin of the lake, as a basis for a mail-coach road. This infernal mass of solid masonry swept away the loveliest of sylvan recesses, and the most absolutely charmed against intrusive foot or angry echoes. It did worse: it swept away the stateliest of Flora's daughters, and swept away, at the same time, the birth-place of a well-known verse, describing that stately plant, which is perhaps (as a separate line) the most exquisite that the poetry of earth can show. The plant was the *Osmunda regalis*—

> "Plant lovelier in its own recess
> Than Grecian Naiad seen at earliest dawn
> Tending her fount, or *lady of the lake,*
> *Sole-sitting by the shores of old romance.*"

It is this last line and a-half which some have held to ascend in beauty as much beyond any single line known to literature, as the Osmunda ascends in luxury of splendour above all other ferns. I have restored the original word *lake,* which the poet himself, under an erroneous impression, had dismissed for *mere.* But the line rests no longer on an earthly reality—the recess which suggested it is gone: the Osmunda has fled; and a vile causeway, such as Sin and Death build in Milton over Chaos, fastening it with "asphaltic slime" and "pins of adamant," having long displaced the loveliest chapel (as I may call it) in the whole natural cathedral of Grasmere, I have since considered Grasmere itself a ruin of its former self.

Edinburgh and to Ireland. Some time after, we at the Lakes heard that he was living in Wales. Apparently he had the instinct within him of his own Wandering Jew for eternal restlessness. But events were now hurrying upon his heart of hearts. Within less than ten years, the whole arrear of his life was destined to revolve. Within that space, he had the whole burden of life and death to exhaust; he had the worst of his suffering to suffer, and all his work to work.

In about four years, his first marriage was dissolved by the death of his wife. She had brought to Shelley two children. But feuds arose between them, owing to incompatible habits of mind. They parted. And it is one chief misery of a beautiful young woman, separated from her natural protector, that her desolate situation attracts and stimulates the calumnies of the malicious. Stung by these calumnies, and oppressed (as I have understood) by the loneliness of her abode, perhaps, also, by the delirium of fever, she threw herself into a pond, and was drowned. The name under which she first enchanted all eyes, and sported as the most playful of nymph-like girls, is now forgotten amongst men; and that other name, for a brief period her ambition and her glory, is inscribed on her gravestone as the name under which she wept and she despaired—suffered and was buried—turned away even from the faces of her children, and sought a hiding-place in darkness.

After this dreadful event, an anonymous life of Shelley asserts that he was for some time deranged. Pretending to no private and no circumstantial acquaintance with the case, I cannot say how that really was. There is a great difficulty besetting all sketches of lives so steeped in trouble as was Shelley's. If you have a confidential knowledge of

the case, as a dear friend privileged to stand by the bedside of raving grief, how base to use such advantages of position for the gratification of a fugitive curiosity in strangers! If you have no such knowledge, how little qualified you must be for tracing the life with the truth of sympathy, or for judging it with the truth of charity! To me it appears, from the peace of mind which Shelley is reported afterwards to have recovered for a time, that he could not have had to reproach himself with any harshness or neglect as contributing to the shocking catastrophe. Neither ought any reproach to rest upon the memory of this first wife, as respects her relation to Shelley. Nonconformity of tastes might easily arise between two parties, without much blame to either, when one of the two had received from nature an intellect and a temperament so dangerously eccentric, and constitutionally carried, by delicacy so exquisite of organisation, to eternal restlessness and irritability of nerves, if not absolutely at times to lunacy.

About three years after this tragical event, Shelley, in company with his second wife, the daughter of Godwin and Mary Wolstonecraft, passed over for a third time to the Continent, from which *he* never came back. They lived up and down in Northern Italy; and, I believe, happily. On Monday, July 8, 1822, being then in his twenty-ninth year, Shelley was returning from Leghorn to his home at Lerici, in a schooner-rigged boat of his own, twenty-four feet long, eight in the beam, and drawing four feet water. His companions were only two—Mr Williams, formerly of the Eighth Dragoons, and Charles Vivian, an English seaman in Shelley's service. The run homewards would not have occupied more than six or eight hours. But the Gulf of Spezzia is peculiarly dangerous for small craft in bad

weather; and, unfortunately, a squall of about one hour's duration came on, the wind at the same time shifting so as to blow exactly in the teeth of the course to Lerici. From the interesting narrative drawn up by Mr Trelawney, well known at that time for his connection with the Greek Revolution, it seems that for eight days the fate of the boat was unknown; and during that time couriers had been despatched along the whole line of coast between Leghorn and Nice, under anxious hopes that the voyagers might have run into some creek for shelter. But at the end of the eight days all suspense ceased. Some articles belonging to Shelley's boat had previously been washed ashore: these might have been thrown overboard; but finally the two bodies of Shelley and Mr Williams came on shore near Via Reggio, about four miles apart. Both were in a state of advanced decomposition, but were fully identified. Vivian's body was not recovered for three weeks. From the state of the two corpses, it had become difficult to remove them; and they were therefore burned by the seaside, on funeral pyres, with the classic rites of paganism, four English gentlemen being present—Capt. Shenly of the navy, Mr Leigh Hunt, Lord Byron, and Mr Trelawney. A circumstance is added by Mr Gilfillan, which previous accounts do not mention—viz., that Shelley's heart remained unconsumed by the fire; but this is a phenomenon that has repeatedly occurred at judicial deaths by fire. The remains of Mr Williams, when collected from the fire, were conveyed to England; but Shelley's were buried in the Protestant burying ground at Rome, not far from a child of his own, and Keats the poet. It is remarkable that Shelley, in the preface to his "Adonais," dedicated to the memory of that young poet, had spoken with delight of this cemetery, as "An open space among

the ruins" (of ancient Rome), "covered in winter with violets and daisies;" adding, "it might make one in love with death, to think that one should be buried in so sweet a place."

I have allowed myself to abridge the circumstances as reported by Mr Trelawney and Mr Hunt, partly on the consideration that three-and-twenty years (now in 1857 five-and-thirty) have passed since the event, so that a new generation has had time to grow up, not feeling the interest of *contemporaries* in Shelley, and generally, therefore, unacquainted with the case; but partly for the purpose of introducing the following comment of Mr Gilfillan on the striking points of a catastrophe, "which robbed the world of this strange and great spirit," and which secretly tempts men to superstitious feelings, even whilst they are denying them:—

"Everybody knows that, on the arrival of Leigh Hunt in Italy, Shelley hastened to meet him. During all the time he spent in Leghorn, he was in brilliant spirits—to him ever a sure prognostic of coming evil." [That is, in the Scottish phrase, he was *fey*.] "On his return to his home and family, his skiff was overtaken by a fearful hurricane, and all on board perished. To a gentleman who, at the time, was with a glass surveying the sea, the scene of his drowning assumed a very striking appearance. A great many vessels were visible, and among them one small skiff, which attracted his particular attention. Suddenly a dreadful storm, attended by thunder and columns of lightning, swept over the sea, and eclipsed the prospect. When it had passed, he looked again. The larger vessels were all safe, riding upon the swell; the skiff only had gone down for ever. And in that skiff was Alastor!*

* "*Alastor:*"—*i. e.*, Shelley. Mr Gilfillan names him thus from the designation self-assumed by Shelley, in one of the least intelligible amongst his poems.

Here he had met his fate. Wert thou, O religious sea, only avenging on his head the cause of thy denied and insulted Deity? Were ye, ye elements, in your courses, commissioned to destroy him? Ah! there is no reply. The surge is silent; the elements have no voice. In the eternal councils the secret is hid of the reason of the man's death. And there, too, rests the still more tremendous secret of the character of his destiny."*

These words are Mr Gilfillan's, and possibly pursue the scrutiny too far: conscious, indeed, that it tends beyond the limits of charity, Mr Gilfillan recalls himself from this attempt to fathom the unfathomable. But undoubtedly the temptation is great, in minds not superstitious, to read a significance and a silent personality in such a fate applied to such a defier of the Christian heavens. As a shepherd by his dog fetches out one of his flock from amongst five hundred, so did the holy hurricane seem to fetch out from the multitude of sails *that* one which carried him that hated the hopes of the world; and the sea, which swelled and ran down within an hour, was present at the audit. We are reminded forcibly of the sublime storm in the wilder-

* The immediate cause of the catastrophe was supposed to be this:—Shelley's boat had reached a distance of four miles from the shore, when the storm suddenly arose, and the wind suddenly shifted: "From excessive smoothness," says Mr Trelawney, all at once the sea was "foaming, breaking, and getting up into a very heavy swell." After one hour the swell went down, and towards evening it was almost a calm. The circumstances were all adverse: the gale, the current setting into the gulf, the instantaneous change of wind, acting upon an undecked boat, having all the sheets fast, overladen, and no expert hands on board but one, made the foundering as sudden as it was inevitable. The boat is supposed to have filled to leeward, and (carrying two tons of ballast) to have gone down like a shot. A book found in the pocket of Shelley, and the unaltered state of the dress on all the corpses when washed on shore, sufficiently indicated that not a moment's preparation for meeting the danger had been possible.

ness (as given in the fourth book of "Paradise Regained"), and the remark upon it made by the mysterious tempter—

> "This tempest at this desert most was bent,
> Of men at thee."

Undoubtedly, I do not understand Mr Gilfillan, more than myself, to read a "judgment" in this catastrophe. But there is a solemn appeal to the thoughtful, in a death of so much terrific grandeur following upon defiances of such unparalleled audacity. Æschylus acknowledged the same sense of mysterious awe, and all antiquity acknowledged it, in the story of Amphiaraus.*

Shelley, it must be remembered, carried his irreligion to a point beyond all others. Of the darkest beings we are told that they "believe and tremble;" but Shelley believed and *hated*, and his defiances were meant to show that he did *not* tremble. Yet, has he not the excuse of something like *monomania* upon this subject? I firmly believe it. But a superstition, old as the world, clings to the notion, that words of deep meaning, uttered even by lunatics or by idiots, execute themselves; and that also, when uttered in presumption, they bring round their own retributive chastisements.

On the other hand, however shocked at Shelley's obstinate revolt from all religious sympathies with his fellow-men, no man is entitled to deny the admirable qualities of his moral nature, which were as striking as his genius. Many people remarked something seraphic in the expression of his features; and something seraphic there was in his nature. No man was better qualified to have loved Christianity; and to no man, resting under the shadow of that one darkness, would Christianity have said more

* See "The Seven against Thebes" of Æschylus.

gladly—*talis cum sis, utinam noster esses!* * Shelley would, from his earliest manhood, have sacrificed all that he possessed to any comprehensive purpose of good for the race of man. He dismissed all injuries and insults from his memory. He was the sincerest and the most truthful of human creatures. He was also the purest. If he denounced marriage as a vicious institution, *that* was but another phasis of the partial lunacy which affected him: for to no man were purity and fidelity more essential elements in his idea of real love. I agree, therefore, heartily with Mr Gilfillan, in protesting against the thoughtless assertion of some writer in the "Edinburgh Review"—that Shelley at all selected the story of his "Cenci" on account of its horrors, or that he has found pleasure in dwelling on those horrors. Far from it! Indeed, he has retreated so entirely from the most shocking feature of the story—viz., the incestuous violence of Cenci the father—as actually to leave it doubtful whether the murder were in punishment of the last outrage committed, or in repulsion of a menace continually repeated. The true motive of the selection of such a story was—not its darkness, but (as Mr Gilfillan, with so much penetration, perceives) the light which fights with the darkness: Shelley found the whole attraction of this dreadful tale in the angelic nature of Beatrice, as revealed in local traditions and in the portrait of her by Guido. Everybody who has read with understanding the "Wallenstein" of Schiller, is aware of the repose and the divine relief arising upon a background of so much darkness, such a tumult of ruffians, bloody intriguers, and assassins, from the situation of the two lovers, Max. Piccolomini and the Princess Thekla, both

* *Such when thou art, would to God thou wert ours.*

yearning so profoundly after peace, both so noble, both so young, and both destined to be so unhappy. The same fine relief, the same light shining in darkness, arises here from the touching beauty of Beatrice, from her noble aspirations after deliverance, from the remorse which reaches her in the midst of real innocence, from her meekness, and from the depth of her inexpressible affliction. Even the murder, even the parricide, though proceeding from herself, do but deepen that background of darkness, which throws into fuller revelation the glory of that suffering face immortalised by Guido.

Something of a similar effect arises to myself when reviewing the general abstract of Shelley's life—so brief, so full of agitation, so full of strife. When one thinks of the early misery which he suffered, and of the insolent infidelity which, being yet so young, he wooed with a lover's passion, then the darkness of midnight begins to form a deep, impenetrable background, upon which the phantasmagoria of all that is to come may arrange itself in troubled phosphoric streams, and in sweeping processions of wo. Yet, again, when one recurs to his gracious nature, his fearlessness, his truth, his purity from all fleshliness of appetite, his freedom from vanity, his diffusive love and tenderness —suddenly out of the darkness reveals itself a morning of May, forests and thickets of roses advance to the foreground, from the midst of them looks out "the eternal child," * cleansed from his sorrow, radiant with joy, having

* "*The eternal child:*"—This beautiful expression, so true in its application to Shelley, I borrow from Mr Gilfillan; and I am tempted to add the rest of his eloquent parallel between Shelley and Lord Byron, so far as it relates to their external appearance:—"In the forehead and head of Byron there is more massive power and breadth: Shelley's has a smooth, arched, spiritual expression; wrinkle there seems none on his brow; it is as if perpetual youth had there dropped its freshness,

power given him to forget the misery which he suffered, power given him to forget the misery which he caused, and leaning with his heart upon that dove-like faith against which his erring intellect had rebelled.

Byron's eye seems the focus of pride and lust: Shelley's is mild, pensive, fixed on you, but seeing you through the mist of his own idealism. Defiance curls on Byron's nostril, and sensuality steeps his full large lips: the lower features of Shelley's face are frail, feminine, flexible. Byron's head is turned upwards; as if, having risen proudly above his contemporaries, he were daring to claim kindred, or to demand a contest, with a superior order of beings: Shelley's is half bent, in reverence and humility, before some vast vision seen by his own eye alone. Misery erect, and striving to cover its retreat under an aspect of contemptuous fury, is the permanent and pervading expression of Byron's countenance: sorrow, softened and shaded away by hope and habit, lies like a 'holier day' of still moonshine upon that of Shelley. In the portrait of Byron, taken at the age of nineteen, you see the unnatural age of premature passion; his hair is young, his dress is youthful; but his face is old: in Shelley you see the eternal child, none the less that his hair is grey, and that 'sorrow seems half his immortality.'"

WHIGGISM

IN ITS RELATIONS TO LITERATURE.

SECTION I.

THE time is come when, without offence, the truth may be spoken of Dr Parr.* Standing too near to a man's

* Twenty-five years ago, I felt strong scruples in approaching the subject of Dr Parr, so much had a *partisan* interest invested the Doctor: he was known, in fact, too well, and too polemically. But mark how things change: at this moment it may be questioned whether one reader in three thousand of readers belonging to this present generation is likely to be aware who the Doctor was, or upon what pretensions rest his claims to commemoration. Most people will suppose him to be that Parr whose glorification arises from having started in the trade of living during the reign of Henry VII., and wound up the concern during that of Charles II. But they will find themselves mistaken. The Doctor belonged entirely to the Georgian era: and his reputation is built upon that variety of scholarship which connects itself with full-blown pedantry. He was a pedagogue; and among the last of that generation that sternly contended for the necessity of unlimited flagellation. He flagellated many distinguished scions of aristocratic families, both Whigs and Tories, many of whom thought vindictively on the subject of the Doctor; and were of opinion that the reverend gentleman would have benefited much by receiving tithes, which so sternly he exacted upon all other subjects of culture, from the inhuman amount of scourgings annually reported as "reaped" in his own private practice. A pedant, it may be thought, can have no historic value. But even amongst pedants there are better and worse; more and less meritorious. Extraordinary erudition, even though travelling into obscure and sterile fields, has its own peculiar

grave, all writers who have trained themselves to habits of liberal sympathy and of generous forbearance—all, in short, but the very juvenile and thoughtless, or the very malignant—put a seal upon their lips. Grief, and the passionate exaggerations of grief, have then a title cheerfully recognised to indulgent consideration. On this principle, I prescribed to myself most willingly a duty of absolute silence at the time of Dr Parr's death, and through the years immediately succeeding. The sorrow of his numerous friends was at that time keen and raw. For a warm-hearted man—and Dr Parr was such—there is an answerable warmth of regret. Errors and indiscretions, that made themselves painfully felt amongst his living associates, are then no longer remembered; virtues are brought forward into high relief; talents and accomplishments are excusably magnified beyond all proportions of truth; and even frailties, that operated most injuriously upon the comfort of his friends, are now regarded as mere natural expressions of a flesh-and-blood humanity, that uttered itself in a language of fiery strength. These extravagances are even graceful under the immediate impulses which prompt them; and for a season they are, and ought to be, indulged. But this season has its limits. Within those

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interest. And about Dr Parr, moreover, there circled another and far different interest. His profession as a schoolmaster, his reputed learning, and his political creed as a Whig, brought him into direct personal intercourse with the great Whig leaders in Parliament. By looking forward to Section the Second of this paper on Parr, my reader will find that (however scandalous such a fact may seem) Dr Parr corresponded with one-half of our British Peerage, with select members of the royal family, and with the Episcopal Bench of that church which daily he insulted. But a deeper interest will arise by anticipation, when I promise him an access through this same pedant to the letters of Fox, in relation to the principles of Burke. Such letters, on such a theme, will hang with gold bullion even the records of a pedant.

limits the rule is—*De mortuis nil nisi bonum.** Beyond them, and when the privilege of recent death can no longer be sustained, this rule gives way to another—*De mortuis nil nisi demonstrabile.* This canon has now taken effect with regard to Dr Parr. The sanctities of private grief must surely have received a sufficient homage, now that the grief itself has submitted to the mitigations of time. Enough has been conceded to the intemperance of sorrowing friendship: the time has at last arrived for the dispassionate appreciation of unbiassed equity.

* "*De mortuis nil nisi bonum:*"—This famous canon of charity "*(Concerning the dead, let us have nothing but what is kind and favourable")* has furnished an inevitable occasion for much doubtful casuistry. The dead, as those pre-eminently unable to defend themselves, enjoy a natural privilege of indulgence amongst the generous and considerate; but not to the extent which this sweeping maxim would proclaim; since, on this principle, in cases innumerable, tenderness to the dead would become the ground of cruel injustice to the living: nay, the maxim would continually counterwork itself; for too inexorable a forbearance with regard to one dead person would oftentimes effectually close the door to the vindication of another. In fact, neither history nor biography is able to move a step without infractions of this rule; a rule emanating from the blind kindliness of grandmothers, who, whilst groping in the dark after one individual darling, forget the collateral or oblique results to others without end. These evils being perceived, equitable casuists began to revise the maxim, and in its new form it stood thus—"*De mortuis nil nisi verum:*" ("*Concerning the dead let us have nothing but what is true*".) Why, certainly that is an undeniable right of the dead; and nobody in his senses would plead for a small *per-centage* of falsehood. Yet, again, in that shape the maxim carries with it a disagreeable air of limiting the right to truth. Unless it is meant to reserve a small allowance of fiction for the separate use of the living, why insist upon truth as peculiarly consecrated to the dead? If all people, living and dead alike, have a right to the benefits of truth, why specify one class, as if in silent contradistinction to some other class, less eminently privileged in that respect? To me it seems evident that the human mind has been long groping darkly after some separate right of the dead in this respect, but which hitherto it has not been able to bring into reconciliation with the known rights of the living. Some distinct privilege there should be, if only it could be sharply defined and limited, through which a special prerogative might be recognised as amongst the sanctities of the grave.

Many are the years which have passed away since I first set eyes upon Dr Samuel Parr. Off and on through the nine or ten years preceding, I had heard him casually mentioned in Oxford, but not for any good. In most cases, the occasion which suggested the mention of his unamiable name was some pointless parody of a Sam-Johnsonian increpation, some Drury-Lane counterfeit of the true Jovian thunderbolts.

In no instance that I recollect had there appeared any felicity in these fulminations of Dr Parr. With an unlimited license of personal invective, and with an extravagance of brutality not credible, except in the case of one who happened to be protected by age and by his petticoats, —consequently with one power more than other people enjoy, who submit themselves to the restraints and decencies of social intercourse,—the Doctor had yet made nothing of his extra privilege: not so much as once had he attained a distinguished success. There was labour, indeed, and effort enough, preparation without end, and most tortuous circumgyration of periods; but from all this sonorous smithery of harsh words, dark and pompous, nothing adequate emerged—nothing commensurate, but simply a voluminous smoke: for the Doctor was a patron of tobacco in a degree which made him the horror of ladies, and which in all respects reached a point of excess not often heard of except on the right bank of the Rhine and the left bank of the Danube. In smoke the Doctor's day commenced; in smoke it closed; smoke literal and abominable to his ox and his ass, to his man-servant and his maid-servant, and to the stranger that was within his gates. But to me there seemed always to settle a smoke symbolical upon the whole sum of the Doctor's life—all that he did, and all that he tried to do. At length a day arrived on which

the Fates had resolved that I should see Dr Parr in the flesh. The scene of this little affair was—a front drawing-room in the London mansion of a Chancery barrister, Mr Basil Montagu, eminent in himself, and foremost amongst Dr Parr's friends. Here was collected a crowd of morning visiters to Mrs Montagu: time—say 3 P.M. on a summer day in the year 1812: and in a back drawing-room was heard, at intervals, the clamorous laugh of Dr Samuel Parr, then recently arrived from the country upon a visit to his London friend. The miscellaneous company assembled were speedily apprised *who* was the owner of that obstreperous laugh—so monstrously beyond the key of good society; it transpired, also, *who* it was that provoked the laugh, and in a subdued key sometimes accompanied that laugh; it was the very celebrated *Bobus* Smith. And, as a hope was expressed that one or both of these gentlemen might soon appear amongst us, most of the company lingered, in the very reasonable expectation of seeing Dr Sam—but I myself on the very doubtful chance of seeing Mr Bobus. Many of my junior readers, who cannot count back so far as to the year in question (1812), are likely to be much at a loss for the particular kind of celebrity which could possibly illustrate a name so little known to these present days as this of Bobus Smith. I interrupt, therefore, my little account of Dr Parr, with the slightest outline of Mr Smith's story and his pretensions. Bobus, then, was a brother of the Rev. Sidney Smith, already at that time well known as a wit and humorist, but through the next thirty and forty years even more so. Mr Robert Smith, however, even then held the higher place in the esteem of his own domestic circle, for originality and power. How he came to be known as *Bobus*, arose naturally thus: Robert being Latin-

ised by adding the ordinary termination *us*, it was a playful expression of analogy to Latinise the familiar abbreviation *Bob* by the same process, as *Bob*[us]. At Cambridge, where he had drawn public attention upon himself by Latin philosophic verses, framed on the model externally of Lucretius (*i.e.*, as regards archaic forms of language), and otherwise much in the spirit of the Lucretian grandeur as to Orphic enthusiasm and fiery movement,—all these metrical essays having been signed *Bob*[us] *Smith*, had naturally made him known to the public under that signature.* But these were the playful *αγωνισματα*, the rope-dancing trials of skill, that belonged to the earlier stages of his manhood. His maturer years exposed a loftier scale of ambition. Already, in the year 1808 or 1809, I had been told (whether truly or not) that Mr Bobus had some years before announced his determination to do two little things, neither of which is easy, but one of which may be viewed as a sort of stepping-stone to the other; so that the two jointly may be easier to do than the last singly. The first was—to create a fortune of sufficient magnitude in Bengal. Secondly, by and through the leverage of that Indian fortune, to vault by a hop-step-and-jump into the post of prime minister. A man, armed with such a spirit of learned judgment upon life as Mr Bobus, could not be ignorant that to such a grand result there must co-operate not merely many a splendid intellectual gift, but also many a splendid gift of fortune—many a splendid connection—many a splendid opportunity—many a splendid combination of chance and skill: and yet, with all this knowledge, Mr Bobus was willing to stand the risk of the

* "*That signature:*"—The first syllable not being pronounced short, as in the English name *Bob*, but long, as in *Bobus*, the dative plural of the word *bos* by contraction for *bovibus*.

dice; or else, in open defiance of the dice, was willing to throw himself, in faith upon his own intellectual supremacy, such as he conceived it to be. At last the fortune was made; secondly, it was remitted; and then, thirdly, Mr Bobus thought of remitting himself. "*He's coming!*" said a whisper from somebody, that might upon consideration be Mr Bobus himself. "*He's coming!*" echoed many whispers. "*He's come!*" was at last announced. And all the world of those in the secret stood on tiptoe, waiting for the result. He took the necessary steps for prosecuting his self-created mission: he caused himself to be returned to Parliament for some close borough; he took his seat; on a fitting occasion he prepared to utter his maiden oration; for that purpose he raised himself bolt upright upon his pins; all the world was hushed: you might have heard not merely a pin, but even a needle drop. At this critical moment of his life, upon which all his vast cloud-built fabrics of ambition were suspended, when, if ever, he was called upon to converge all his energies, suddenly his presence of mind forsook him; he faltered; rudder and compass slipped away from him; and—oh! Castor and Pollux! —Bobus foundered! nor, from that day to this, has he been heard of in the courts of ambition. This catastrophe had occurred some time before the present occasion; and an event which entirely extinguished the world's interest in Mr Bobus Smith had more than doubled my own. Consequently I waited with much solicitude. At length the door opened; which recalls me from my digression into the high-road of my theme: for not Mr Bobus Smith entered, who would have compelled me to continue the digression, but simply Dr Parr, who in one moment compelled me to close it.

Nobody announced him; and we were left to collect his

name from his dress and his conversation. Hence it happened, that for some time I was disposed to question myself whether this might not be Mr Bobus even (little as it could be supposed to resemble him), rather than Dr Parr, so much did he contradict all my rational preconceptions. "A man," said I, "who has insulted people so outrageously, ought not to have done this in single reliance upon his professional protections; a brave man, and a man of honour, would here have carried about with him, in his manner and deportment, some such language as this,—'Do not think that I shelter myself under my gown from the natural consequences of the affronts I offer; mortal combats I am forbidden, sir, as a Christian minister, to engage in; but, as I find it impossible to refrain from occasional license of tongue, I am very willing to fight a few rounds in a ring, with any gentleman who fancies himself ill used.'" Let me not be misunderstood; I do not contend that Dr Parr should often, or regularly, have offered this species of satisfaction. But I *do* insist upon it—that no man should have given the very highest sort of provocation so wantonly as Dr Parr is recorded to have done, unless conscious that, in a last extremity, he was ready, like a brave man, to undertake a short turn-up, in a private room, with any person whatsoever whom he had insulted past endurance. A doctor, who had so often tempted (which is a kind way of saying—had merited) a cudgelling, ought himself to have had some ability to cudgel. Dr Johnson assuredly would have acted on that principle. Had volume the second of that same folio with which he floored Osburn happened to lie ready to the prostrate man's grasp, nobody can suppose that Johnson would have disputed Osburn's right to retaliate; in which case, a regular succession of rounds would have been esta-

blished. Considerations such as these, and Dr Parr's undeniable reputation (granted even by his most admiring biographers) as a sanguinary flagellator, throughout his long career of pedagogue, had prepared me—nay, entitled me—to expect in Dr Parr a huge carcase of man, fourteen stone at the least. Even his style, pursy and bloated, and his sesquipedalian words, all warranted the same expectation. Hence, then, my surprise, and the perplexity I have recorded, when the door opened, and a little man, in a most plebeian wig (far, indeed, from that wig of his which the "Edinburgh Review" of eight or nine years earlier had described as the mighty astonishment, or, in Greek, the *μεγα θαυμα* of barbers), cut his way through the company, and made for a *fauteuil* standing opposite to the fire. Into this he *lunged;* and then forthwith, without preface or apology, began to open his talk upon the room. Here arose a new marvel, and a greater. If I had been scandalised at Dr Parr's want of thews and bulk, conditions so indispensable for enacting the part of Sam Johnson, much more, and with better reason, was I now petrified with his voice, utterance, gestures, and demeanour. Conceive, reader, by way of counterpoise to the fine classical pronunciation * of Dr Johnson, an infantine lisp—the worst I ever heard—from the lips of a man above sixty, and accompanied with all sorts of ridiculous grimaces and little stage gesticulations. As he sat in his chair, turning alternately to the right and to the left, that he might distribute

* Boswell, whose ear was peculiarly quick, and sensibilities, to the better and the worse, in this accomplishment, were fastidiously cultivated—for, in his English residences, he made a diligent use of his numerous introductions to the *élite* of English society—has somewhere noticed expressly the singular beauty which distinguished Dr Johnson's accentuation and intonation of English.

his edification in equal proportions amongst us, he seemed the very image of a little French gossiping abbé.

Yet all that I have mentioned was, and seemed to be, a trifle by comparison with the infinite pettiness of his matter. Nothing did he utter but little shreds of calumnious tattle—the most ineffably silly and frivolous of all that was then circulating in the Whig *salons* of London against the Regent. I ought, by the way, to have prefaced my little narrative by mentioning, that about this summer of 1812 the Whig party had perfected their sense of a perfidy to themselves on the part of the Regent. In 1810 it happened that George III. accomplished as a king what is called the *golden* jubilee. The twenty-fifth year of any connection—as, for instance, of a marriage—is called the *silver* jubilee; but the fiftieth year the *golden*. This had been celebrated with peculiar enthusiasm by the nation; and it was supposed that the nervous sympathies of the king had been too powerfully called into activity by such parts of the festivities as could not, with every care, be wholly withdrawn from his participation. Out of this excitement arose a second insanity. On the first, when the Prince of Wales was a very young and indiscreet man, Mr Pitt's party was not disposed to have lodged much power in his Royal Highness's hands, and none at all as due by any constitutional right. But things were altered now: the Florizel* that had been sowing his wild oats in the former lunacy, was now an elderly man—his *Perditas*, one and all, were dead and buried; and, what was of even more importance,

* "*The Florizel:*"—See Shakspere's "Winter's Tale." At this great distance of time, when seventy years or so have intervened, it becomes necessary to mention that the beautiful Mrs Robinson, who was the first love of the Prince of Wales, originally caught his eye in performing the part of *Perdita* in this exquisite drama.

it seemed too probable (as in fact happened) that this second lunacy would not depart unless in company with life. The new Regent might now, therefore, be regarded as virtually king. This trebled his value to that party which should now succeed in winning his confidence. But on such a question, what room for a doubt? Surely that party which had stood by him through life possessed a paramount claim on his gratitude. True; but paramount to all private claims was that of Britain and of Europe. Was the war in Spain to be maintained or not? The Whigs had so used this great question as an engine of partisan attack upon their opponents, that it had become impossible for *them*, with any colour of consistency, to do otherwise than withdraw the British armies from the Peninsula. That one point settled the case; and upon that argument, just at this time in 1812, the wrath of the Whig party was culminating.

He began precisely in these words: "Oh! I shall tell you" (laying a stress upon the word *shall*, which still further aided the resemblance to a Frenchman) "a sto-hee" (lispingly for story) "about the Pince Thegent" (such was his nearest approximation to *Prince Regent*). "Oh, the Pince Thegent!—the Pince Thegent!—what a sad, sad man he has turned out! But you *shall* hear. Oh, what a Pince!—what a Thegent!—what a sad Pince Thegent!" And so the old babbler went on, sometimes wringing his hands in lamentation, sometimes flourishing them with French grimaces and shrugs of shoulders, sometimes expanding and contracting his fingers like a fan. After an hour's twaddle of this scandalous description, suddenly he rose, and hopped out of the room, exclaiming all the way, "*Oh, what a Pince!—Oh, what a Thegent! Is it a Thegent, is it a Pince, that you call this man? Oh, what a sad Pince!*

Did anybody ever hear of such a sad Pince!—such a sad Thegent!—such a sad, sad Pince Thegent? Oh, what a Pince!" &c., *da capo.*

Not without indignation did I exclaim to myself, on this winding up of the scene, "And so this, then, this lithping slander-monger, and retailer of gossip fit rather for washerwomen over their tea, than for scholars and statesmen, is the champion whom his party would propound as the adequate antagonist of Samuel Johnson! Faugh!"—— I had occasion, in this instance, as in so many others which I have witnessed, to remark the conflict between the natural and the artificial (or adopted) opinions of the world, and the practical triumph of the first. A crowd of ladies were present; most of them had been taught to believe that Dr Parr was a prodigious scholar, and in some mysterious way, and upon something not exactly known or understood, except by learned men, a great authority. Accordingly, upon his first entrance, all of them were awed—deep silence prevailed—and the hush of indefinite expectation. Two minutes dispersed that feeling; the Doctor spoke, and the spell was broken. No sooner was the style and tendency of Dr Parr's gossip apparent, than a large majority of those present broke up into little parties, entered upon their own affairs, and, by a tacit convention, agreed to consider the Doctor as addressing himself exclusively to the lady of the house and her immediate circle. Had Sam Johnson been the talker, nobody would have presumed to do this; secondly, nobody would have been so indiscreet as to do this—he would not have acknowledged weariness had he felt it; but, lastly, nobody would have wished to do this—weariness was impossible in the presence of Sam Johnson. Neither let it be said that perhaps the ladies present were unintellectual,

and careless of a scholar's conversation. They were not so; all were tinctured with literature, and one or two of distinguished talents. And I can undertake to say, that any man of tolerable colloquial powers, speaking upon a proper topic, would have commanded the readiest attention. As it was, every one felt (if she did not even whisper to her neighbour), "Here, at least, is nothing to be learned."

Such was my own first interview with Dr Parr; such its issue. And now let me explain my drift in thus detailing its circumstances. Some people will say, the drift was doubtless to exhibit Dr Parr in a disadvantageous light—as a petty gossiper, and a man of mean personal appearance. No, by no means. Far from it. I, that write this paper, have myself a mean personal appearance; and I love men of mean appearance. Having one spur more than other men to seek distinction in those paths where nature has not obstructed them, they have one additional chance (and a great one) for giving an extended development to their intellectual powers. Many a man has risen to eminence under the powerful reaction of his mind, in fierce counter-agency (sometimes even more nobly, in grand benignant indifference) to the scorn of the unworthy, daily evoked by his personal defects, who with a handsome person would have sunk into the luxury of a careless life under the tranquillising smiles of continual admiration. Dr Parr, therefore, lost nothing in *my* esteem by showing a meanish exterior. Yet even this was worth mentioning, and had a value in reference to my present purpose. I like Dr Parr: I may say, even, that I love him, for some noble qualities of heart that really *did* belong to him, and were continually breaking out in the midst of his singular infirmities. But this, or a far nobler moral

character than Dr Parr's, can offer no excuse for giving a false elevation to his intellectual pretensions, and raising him to a level which he will be found incapable of keeping when the props of partial friendship are withdrawn. My object is, to value Dr Parr's claims, and to assign his true station both in literature and in those other walks of life upon which he has come forward as a public man. With such a purpose before me, it cannot be wholly irrelevant to notice even Dr Parr's person, and to say, that it was at once coarse, and in some degree mean; for his too friendly biographers have repeatedly made his personal appearance the subject of flattery, and more than once have expressly characterised it as "dignified," which it was *not*, according to any possible standard of dignity, but far otherwise; and it is a good inference (is it not?) from such a mis-statement to other mis-statements grosser and more injuriously misleading. His person was poor, and his features were coarse and ignoble, with an air, at the same time, of drollery, that did not sit well upon age or the gravity of his profession. Upon one feature, indeed, Dr Parr valued himself exceedingly; this was his eye. He fancied that it was peculiarly searching and significant: he conceited, even, that it frightened people, and had a particular form of words for expressing the severe use of this basilisk function: "I *inflicted* my eye upon him," was his phrase in such cases. But the thing was all a mistake; his eye could be borne very well; there was no mischief in it. Doubtless, when a nervous gentleman in a pulpit, who was generally the subject of these inflictions, saw a comical-looking old man from below levelling one eye at him, with as knowing an expression as he could throw into it, mere perplexity as to the motive and proper construction of so unseasonable a personality might flutter

his spirits, and, to the vain, misjudging operator below, might distort this equivocal confusion, arising out of blank ignorance of his meaning, into the language of a conscious and confessing culprit. Explanations would be of rare occurrence; for some would not condescend to complain; and others would feel that the insult, unless it was for the intention, had scarcely body enough and tangible shape to challenge inquiry. To remonstrate would only be to let Dr Parr know that he had succeeded in lodging an affront, and also to give him an opportunity for redoubling it. They would anticipate that the same man who, in so solemn a situation as that between a congregation and their pastor, could offer such an affront, would be apt to throw a fresh ridicule upon the complaint itself, by saying—"Fix my eye upon you, did I? Why, that's all my eye with a vengeance. Look at you, did I? Well, sir, a cat may look at a king." This said in a tone of sneer; and then, with sneer and strut at once, "I trust, sir—humbly, I take leave to suppose, sir—that Dr Parr is not so obscure a person, not so wholly unknown in this sublunary world, but he may have license to look even at as great a man as the Reverend Mr So-and-so." And thus the worthy Doctor would be confirmed in his mistake that he carried about with him, in his very homely collection of features, an organ of singular power and effect for detecting hidden guilt.

A mistake, at all events, it was; and his biographers have gone into it as largely under the delusions of friendship, as he under the delusions of vanity. On this, therefore, I ground what seems a fair inference—that if, in matters so plain and palpable as the character of a man's person, and the cast of his features, it has been possible for his friends to fall into gross errors and exaggerations,

much more may we count upon such fallacies of appreciation in dealing with the subtler qualities of his intellect, and his less determinable pretensions as a scholar. Hence I have noticed these lower and trivial misrepresentations as presumptions, for suspecting more weighty instances of the same exaggerating spirit. The *animus* which prompted so unserviceable a falsification of the real case, is not likely to have hesitated when coming upon ground more important to Dr Parr's reputation, and, at the same time, much more susceptible of a sincere latitude of appraisement, even amongst the neutral. I call the whole estimates to a new audit; and submit the claims of Dr Parr to a more equitable tribunal. I would anticipate the award of posterity; and it is no fault of mine that, in doing so, it will be necessary to hand the Doctor down from that throne in the cathedral of English clerical merit, on which the intemperate zeal of his friends has seated him for the moment, into some humble prebendal stall. Far more agreeable it would naturally have been to assist in raising a man unjustly depreciated, than to undertake an office generally so ungracious as that of repressing the presumptuous enthusiasm of partisans, where it may *seem* to have come forward, with whatever exaggerations, yet still in a service of disinterested friendship, and on behalf of a man who, after all, was undeniably learned. The disinterestedness, however, of that admiration which has gathered about Dr Parr is not so genuine as it may appear. His biographers (be it recollected) are bigots, who serve their superstition in varnishing their idol; they are Whigs, who lose no opportunity of undervaluing Tories; they are religious Dissenters, who value their theme quite as much for the collateral purpose which it favours of attacking the Church of England, as for its direct and avowed one of

lauding Dr Parr. Moreover, in the letters (which, in the undigested chaos of Dr Johnstone's collection, form three volumes out of eight), Dr Parr himself obtains a mischievous power, which, in a more regular form of composition, he would not have possessed, and which, as an honest man, we must presume that he would not have desired. Letters addressed to private correspondents, and only by accident reaching the press, have all the license of private conversation. Most of us, perhaps, send a little treason or so at odd times through the post-office. In all this there is no blame. *Hanc veniam petimusque damusque vicissim.* Such an indulgence we claim for ourselves, and allow to our antagonists: we give and we take interchangeably. But publication is another thing. Rash insinuations, judgments of *ultra* violence, injurious anecdotes of loose or no authority, and paradoxes sportively maintained in the certainty of a benignant construction on the part of the individual correspondent—all these, when printed, become armed, according to circumstances of time and person, with the power of extensive mischief. It is undeniable, that through Dr Parr's published letters are scattered some scores of passages which, had he been alive, or had they been brought forward in a formal address to the public, would have called forth indignant replies of vehement expostulation or blank contemptuous contradiction. And many even of his more general comments on political affairs, or on the events and characters of his times, would have been overlooked only upon the consideration that the place which he occupied, in life or in literature, was not such as to aid him in giving effect to his opinions.

In many of these cases, as we have said already, the writer had a title to allowance, which those who publish his letters have *not*. But there are other cases which call

for as little indulgence to him as to them. In some of his political intemperances, he may be considered as under a twofold privilege: first, of place—since, as a *private* letter-writer, writing in his study things meant to be read in his correspondent's drawing-room, he must be held as within the protection and the license of his own fireside; secondly, of time—since, on a general rule of construction, it may be assumed that such communications are not deliberate, but thrown off on the spur of the occasion; that they express, therefore, not a man's settled and abiding convictions, but the first momentary impulses of his passion or his humour. But in many of his malicious sarcasms and disparaging judgments, upon contemporaries who might be regarded as competitors with himself, either for the prizes of clerical life, or for public estimation, Dr Parr could take no benefit by this liberal construction. The sentiments he avowed in many cases of this description were not in any respect hasty or unpremeditated ebullitions of a momentary impulse. This is evident; because uniformly, and as often almost as he either spoke or wrote upon the persons in question, he gave vent to the same bilious jealousy in sneers or libels of one uniform character; and, if he forbore to do this in his open and avowed publications, the fair inference is, that his fears or his interest restrained him; since it is notorious, from the general evidence of his letters and his conversation, that none of those whom he viewed with these jealous feelings could believe that they owed anything by possibility to his courtesy or his moderation.

For example, and just to illustrate my meaning, in what terms did he speak and write of the very eminent Dean of Carlisle, the late Dr Isaac Milner? How did he treat Bishop Herbert Marsh? How, again, the illustrious

Bishop Horsley? All of them, I answer, with unprovoked scurrility; not one had offered him any slight or offence, —all were persons of gentlemanly bearing, though the last (it is true) had shown some rough play to one of Parr's pet heresiarchs—all of them were entitled to his respect by attainments in various directions superior to his own —and all of them were more favourably known to the world than himself, by useful contributions to science, or theologic learning. Dean Milner had ruined his own activities by eating opium; and he is known, I believe, by little more than his continuation down to the Lutheran period of that Ecclesiastical History which had been originally undertaken by his brother Joseph, and by the papers which he contributed to the London Philosophical Transactions. But his researches and his accomplishments were of wonderful extent; and his conversation is still remembered by multitudes for its remarkable compass, and its almost Burkian quality of elastic accommodation to the fluctuating accidents of the occasion; so that his contributions were not drawn from recollections of past studies, that fitted in by accident to an alien call, but were felt to be a natural and spontaneous *growth* under the inspirations of the moment. The dean was not much in the world's eye: at intervals, indeed, he was to be found at the tables of the great; more often he sought his ease and consolations in his honourable academic retreat, as the head of Queen's College, Cambridge. There he was the object of dislike to a particular intriguing *clique* that had the ear of Dr Parr. He was also obnoxious to the great majority of mere worldlings, as one of those zealous Christians who are usually denominated *evangelical;* that is to say, in common with the Wilberforces, Thorntons, Hoares, Babingtons, Gisbornes, &c., and many thousands of less dis-

tinguished persons in and out of Parliament, Dean Milner assigned a peculiar emphasis, and a more significant interpretation, to those doctrines of original sin, the terms upon which redemption is offered—to regeneration, sanctification, &c., which have the appearance of being the *characteristic* parts in the Christian economy. Whether otherwise wrong or right in these views, it strikes us poor lay critics (who pretend to no authoritative knowledge on these great mysteries), that those who adopt them have at all events à *primâ facie* title to be considered less worldly, and more spiritual-minded, than the mass of mankind; and such a frame of mind is at least an argument of fitness for religious contemplations, in so far as temper is concerned, be the doctrinal (or merely intellectual) errors what they may. Consequently, for our own parts, humbly sensible as we are of our deficiencies in this great science of Christian philosophy, we could never at any time join in the unthinking ridicule which is scattered by the brilliant and the dull upon these peculiarities. Wheresoever, and whensoever, we must freely avow, that evidences of *real* nonconformity to the spirit of this impure earth of ours command our unfeigned respect. But *that* was a thing which the worthy Dr Parr could not abide. He loved no high or aerial standards in morals or in religion. Visionaries, who encouraged such notions, he viewed (to express it by a learned word) as ἀεροβατοῦντας, and as fit subjects for the chastisement of the secular arm. In fact, he would have persecuted a little upon *such* a provocation. On Mr Pitt and the rest who joined in suspending the *Habeas Corpus* Act, Dr Parr was wont to ejaculate his pastoral benediction in the following after-dinner toast—"*Qui suspenderunt, suspendantur!*" And afterwards, upon occasion of the six bills provoked by the tumults at Manchester,

Glasgow, &c., his fatherly blessing was daily uttered in this little caressing sentiment—"Bills for the throats of those who framed the bills!" On the same principle, he would have prayed fervently—had any Isaac Milner infested his parish—"Let those who would exalt our ideals of Christianity, be speedily themselves exalted!" And, therefore, if any man inquires upon what grounds it was that Dr Parr hated with an intolerant hatred—scorned—and sharpened his gift of sneer upon—the late Dean of Carlisle, I have here told him "the reason why;" and reason enough, I think, in all conscience. For be it known, that, over and above other weighty and obvious arguments for such views, Dr Parr had a standing personal irritation connected with this subject—a continual "thorn in the flesh"—in the relations subsisting between himself and his principal, the incumbent of his own favourite and adopted parish. As the position of the parties was amusing to those who were in possession of the key to the right understanding of it—viz., a knowledge of their several views and opinions—I will pause a moment to describe the circumstances of the case.

Dr Parr, it is well known, spent a long period of his latter life at Hatton, a village in Warwickshire. The living of Hatton belonged to Dr Bridges, who, many a long year ago, was well known in Oxford as one of the fellows in the magnificently-endowed College of Magdalen; that is to say, Dr Bridges was the incumbent at the time when some accident of church preferment brought Dr Parr into that neighbourhood. By an arrangement which I do not exactly understand, the two doctors, for their mutual convenience, exchanged parishes. I find it asserted by Dr Johnstone, that on Dr Parr's side the exchange originated in a spirit of obliging accommodation. It may

be so: although the word *accommodation*, which forced itself slowly upon the hazy intellect of Shakspere's Bardolph as "that by which a man is, or may be thought to be, accommodated," does not certainly appear to have ever found a place in the practical vocabulary of Dr Parr. However, one pointed reservation was made by Dr Bridges (whether in obedience to church discipline or to his private scruples of conscience, I cannot say), viz., that, once in every year (according to my remembrance, for a series of six consecutive Sundays), he should undertake the pulpit duties of the church. On this scheme the two learned clerks built their *alterni fœdera regni;** and, like two buckets, the Drs Bridges and Parr went up and down reciprocally for a long succession of years. The waters, however, which they brought up to the lips of their parishioners were drawn from two different wells; for Dr Bridges shared in the heresy of the Dean of Carlisle. Hence a system of energetic (on Dr Parr's side, we may say of fierce) mutual counteraction. Each, during his own reign, laboured to efface all impressions left by his rival. On Dr Bridges' part, this was probably, in some measure, a necessity of conscience; for he looked upon his flock as ruined in spiritual health by the neglect and ignorance of their pastor. On Dr Parr's, it was the mere bigotry of hatred, such as all schemes of teaching are fitted to provoke which appeal to a standard of ultra perfection, or exact any peculiar sanctity of life. Were Bridges right, in that case, it was clear that Parr was wrong by vital defect. But, on the other hand, were Parr right, then Bridges was wrong only by superfluity and pardonable redundance. Such was the position, such the mutual

* Their compact of alternate sovereignty.

aspects, of the two doctors. Parr's wrath waxed hotter and hotter. Had Dr Bridges happened to be a vulgar sectarian, of narrow education, of low breeding, and without distinguished connections, — those *etesian* gales or annual monsoons, which brought in his periodical scourge, would have been hailed by Parr as the harbingers of a triumph in reversion. Yielding the pulpit to his rival for a few Sundays, he would have relied upon the taste of his parishioners for making the proper distinctions. He would have said—"You have all eyes and ears—you all know that fellow; you all know me: need I say more. Pray, don't kick him when he comes again." But in the present case this sort of contempt was out of the question. Dr Bridges was a man of fortune; travelled and accomplished; familiar with courts and the manners of courts. Even that intercourse with people of rank and fashion, which Parr so much cultivated in his latter years, and which, to his own conceit, placed him so much in advance of his own order, gave him no advantage over Dr Bridges. True, the worthy fanatic (as some people called him) had planted himself in a house at Clifton near Bristol, and spent all his days in running up and down the lanes and alleys of that great city, carrying Christian instruction to the dens of squalid poverty, and raising the torch of spiritual light upon the lairs of dissolute wretchedness. But, in other respects, he was a man *comme il faut*. However his mornings might be spent, his *soirées* were elegant, and it was not an impossible event to meet a prince or an ambassador at his parties. Hence, it became vexatiously difficult to treat him as a person of no social consideration. In that view, he was the better man of the two. And Parr's revenge, year after year, was baulked of its food. In this dilemma of impotent rage, what he could, he did! And the scene was truly whim-

sical. Regularly as Dr Bridges approached, Dr Parr fled the country. As the wheels of Dr Bridges were heard muttering menacingly in advance, Dr Parr's wheels were heard groaning sullenly in retreat. And when the season of this annual affliction drew to a close, when the wrath of Providence was spent, and the church of Hatton passed from under the shadows of eclipse into renovated light, then did Dr Parr—cautiously putting out his feelers to make sure of the enemy's retreat—resume the spiritual sceptre. He congratulated his parish of Hatton that their trials were over; he performed classical *lustrations*, and Pagan rites of expiation; he circled the churchyard nine times *withershins* (or inverting the course of the sun); he fumigated the whole precincts of Hatton Church with shag tobacco; and left no stone unturned to cleanse his little Warwickshire fold from its piacular pollution.

This anecdote illustrates Dr Parr's temper. Mark, reader, his self-contradiction. He hated what he often called "rampant orthodoxy," and was never weary of running down those churchmen who thought it their duty to strengthen the gates of the English Church against Popish superstitions (or what *they* viewed as such), on the one hand —or against Socinianism on the other. Yet, let anything start up in the shape of zealous and fervid devotion—right or wrong—and let it threaten to displace his own lifeless scheme of ethics, or to give a shock of galvanism to his weekly paralytic exhortations; let but a scintillation appear of opposition in that shape, and who so ready to persecute as Dr Parr? Fanaticism, he would tell us, was what he could not bear: the rights of the church must be supported with rigour; if needful, even with severity. He was also a great patron of the church as against laymen; of the parson as against the churchwarden; of the rector's

right to graze his horse upon the graves; of the awful obligation upon his conscience to allow of no darned or ill-washed surplice; of the solemn responsibility which he had undertaken in the face of his country to suffer no bell-ringing except in canonical hours; to enforce the decalogue, and also the rubric; to obey his ecclesiastical superiors within the hours of divine service; and, finally, to read all proclamations or other state documents sent to him by authority with the most dutiful submission, simply reserving to himself the right of making them as ridiculous as possible by his emphasis and cadence. In this fashion Dr Parr manifested his reverence for the church establishment; and for these great objects it seemed to him lawful to persecute. But as to purity of doctrine, zeal, primitive devotion, the ancient faith as we received it from our fathers, or any service pretending to be more than lip service—for all such questionable matters it was incumbent upon us to show the utmost liberality of indifference on the most modern and showy pattern, and, except for Popery, to rely upon Bishop Hoadly. This explanation was necessary to make the anecdote of Dr Bridges fully intelligible; and that anecdote was necessary to explain the many scornful allusions to that reverend gentleman, which the reader will find in Dr Johnstone's collection of letters; but, above all, it was necessary for the purpose of putting him in possession of Dr Parr's character and position as a member of the Church of England.

To return from this digression into the track of our speculations, Dean Milner and Dr Bridges stood upon the same ground in Dr Parr's displeasure. Their offence was the same: their criminality perhaps equal; and it was obviously of a kind that, for example's sake, ought not to be overlooked. But Herbert Marsh was not implicated in

their atrocities. No charge of that nature was ever preferred against *him*. His merits were of a different order; and, confining my remarks to his *original* merit, and that which perhaps exclusively drew upon him the notice of Mr Pitt's government, not so strictly clerical. His earliest public service was, his elaborate account of the regal conferences at Pilnitz, and his consequent justification of this country in the eyes of Europe, on the question then pending between her and the French Republic, with which party lay the *onus* of first virtual aggression, and with which therefore, by implication, the responsibility for that deluge of blood and carnage which followed. This service Herbert Marsh performed in a manner to efface the remembrance of all former attempts. His next service was more in the character of his profession—he introduced his country to the very original labours in theology of Michaelis, and he expanded the compass and value of these labours by his own exertions. Patriots, men even with the feeblest sense of patriotism, have felt grateful to Dr Marsh for having exonerated England from the guilt of creating a state of war lightly—upon a weak motive—upon an unconsidered motive—or indeed upon any motive or reason whatsoever; for a reason supposes choice and election of the judgment, and choice there can be none without an acknowledged alternative. Now it was the triumphant result of Dr Marsh's labours, that alternative there was practically none, under the actual circumstances, for Great Britain; and that war was the mere injunction of a flagrant necessity, coupling the insults and the menaces of France with what are now known to have been the designs, and indeed the momentary interests, of the predominant factions at that epoch. Herbert Marsh has satisfied everybody almost, but the bigots (if any now survive),

of Jacobinism as it raged in 1792 and 1793, when it held its horrid Sabbaths over the altar and the throne, and deluged the scaffolds with innocent blood. All but those he has satisfied. Has he satisfied Dr Parr? No. For those who governed his fluctuating conscience were the parliamentary leaders from whom he expected a bishopric (and would very possibly have got it, had some of them lived a little longer in the first decade of this century, or he himself lived to the end of the third). Hence it does not much surprise me, that, in spite of his natural and creditable horror on the judicial murder of the French king, he relapsed into Jacobinism so fierce, that two years after a friend, by way of agreeable flattery, compliments him as being only "*half* a *sansculotte;*" a compliment, however, which he doubtless founded more upon his confidence in Dr Parr's original goodness of heart, and the almost inevitable contagion of English society, than upon any warrant which the Doctor had yet given him by words or by acts for so advantageous an opinion. Well, therefore, might Herbert Marsh displease Dr Parr. He was the open antagonist of those through whom only the fortunes of *sansculottes,* thorough-bred, or half-bred, had any chance of thriving; and he had exposed the hollowness of that cause to which the Doctor was in a measure sold.

As to Horsley, his whole life, as a man of letters and a politician, must have won him the acceptable tribute of Dr Parr's fear and hatred; a tribute which Dr Parr paid as duly as his assessed taxes. Publicly, indeed, he durst not touch him; for the horrid scourge which Horsley had wielded at one time, in questions of scholarship and orthodoxy, still resounded in his ears. But in his letters and conversation, Dr Parr fretted for ever at his eminence,

and eyed him grudgingly and malignly; and those among his correspondents who were not too generous and noble-minded to pay their court through his weaknesses, evidently were aware that a sneer at Bishop Horsley was as welcome as a basket of game. Sneers, indeed, were not the worst: there are to be found in Dr Parr's correspondence some dark insinuations, apparently pointed at Horsley, which involve a sort of charges that should never be thrown out against any man without the accompaniment of positive attestations. What may have been the tenor of that bishop's life and conversation, I do not take upon myself to say. It is little probable, at this time of day, under the censorious vigilance of so many unfriendly eyes, and in a nation where even the persons upon the *judicial* bench exhibit in their private lives almost a sanctity of deportment, that a dignitary of the English Church will err by any scandalous immorality. Be that, however, as it may, and confining our view to Horsley in his literary character, I must say, that he is far beyond the reach of Dr Parr's hostility. As a polemic and a champion of his own church, he was above the competition of any contemporary divine. As a theologian, he reconciles the nearly contradictory merits of novelty and originality with well-meditated orthodoxy; and I may venture to assert, that his *Sermons* produced a greater impression than any English book of pure divinity, for the last century. In saying this, I do not speak of the sale; what that might be, I know not; I speak of the strength of the impression diffused through the upper circles, as apparent in the reverential terms which, after the appearance of that work, universally marked the sense of cultivated men in speaking of Bishop Horsley—even of those who had previously viewed him with some dislike in his character of controversialist.

Let the two men be compared; not the veriest bigot amongst the Dissenters, however much he would naturally prefer as a companion, or as a subject for eulogy, that man who betrayed the interests of his own church, to him who was its column of support and ornament, could have the hardihood to insinuate that Dr Horsley was properly, or becomingly, a mark for the scurrilities of Dr Parr. In what falls within the peculiar province of a schoolmaster, I think it probable (to make every allowance which candour demands) that Dr Parr had that superior accuracy which is maintained by the practice of teaching. But in reach and compass of intellect, in those mixed branches of speculative research which belong equally to divinity and to metaphysics (as in the Platonic philosophy), in philosophic scholarship, and generally in vigour of style and thought, I suppose Horsley to have had, in the eyes of the public no less than in the realities of the case, so prodigiously the advantage, that none but a sycophant or a false friend would think of suggesting seriously a comparison so disadvantageous to Dr Parr. But at all events, let the *relations* of merit be what they may in Horsley, certainly his absolute merit is unquestionable; and the continued insults of Dr Parr are insufferable.

Upon these justifying grounds—viz., special attacks past counting, besides a general *system* of disparagement and contumely towards the most distinguished pretensions in church and state, unless ranged on the side of the Whigs—I stand for a sufficient apology in pressing the matter strongly against Dr Parr. Not Tories only, but all who resist anarchists (for that Dr Parr did not blazon himself in that character, was due to the lucky accident which saved him from all opportunities of *acting* upon his crazy speculations), have an interest in depressing to their pro-

per level those who make a handle of literature for insidious party purposes, polluting its amenities with the angry passions proper to our civil dissensions, and abusing the good-nature with which we Tories are always ready to welcome literary merit, without consideration of politics. In order to appraise Dr Parr satisfactorily, let us pursue him through his three characters, the triple *role* which he supported in life—of Whig politician; secondly, of scholar (or, expressing our meaning in its widest extent, of literary man); and, finally, of theologian.

There are, in every populous community, many different strata of society, that lie in darkness, as it were, to each other, from mere defect of mutual intercourse; and in the literary world, there are many chambers that have absolutely no intercommunication. Afterwards, when thirty or sixty years have passed away—by means of posthumous memoirs, letters, anecdotes, and other literary monuments—they are all brought, in a manner, face to face; and we, their posterity, first see them as making up a whole, of which they themselves were imperfectly conscious. Every year makes further disclosures; and thus a paradox is realised, that the more we are removed from personal connection with a past age of literature, oftentimes the better we know it.

Meantime, as an appropriate close to this preliminary section, I will put a question—and in a cursory way discuss the proper answer to it—upon Dr Parr, as a man of the world, and ambitious candidate for worldly distinctions; in short, as the architect of his fortunes. Was he, in *this* light, an able and successful man? Or, separating the two parts of that question, which do not *always* proceed concurrently, if he were not successful in a degree corresponding to his own wishes and the expectations of

his friends; if it is notorious that he missed of attaining those prizes which he never hesitated to avow as the objects that stimulated his ambition; in what degree are we to ascribe his failure to want of talent, to misdirection of his talent, to a scrupulous and fastidious integrity, to the injustice of his superiors, or, finally, to mere accidents of ill luck? One man in each ten thousand comes into this world, according to the homely saying, "with a silver spoon in his mouth;" but most men have a fortune to make, a station to create. Taking life as a whole, luck has but little sway in controlling its arrangements. Good sense and perseverance, prudence and energy, these are the fatal deities that domineer over the stars and their aspects. And when an *ambitious* man's coffin knocks at the gates of the tomb, it is a question not unimportant, among other and greater questions, What was he on beginning life—what is he now? What has been his success in playing for the great stakes of his profession or his trade? By his own confession, often and most frankly repeated, Dr Parr was an ambitious man on the vulgarest scheme: what, then, in *his* case, will be the answer to these questions?

The prizes which the Doctor set before his eyes from his earliest days were not very lofty, but they were laudable; and he avowed them with a *naïveté* that was amusing. They were two—a mitre and a coach-and-four. "I am not accustomed," says he (writing to an Irish bishop), "to dissemble the wishes I once had" (this was said in 1807, when he had them more than ever) "of arriving at the profits and splendour of the prelacy, or the claims to them which I believe myself to possess." The bishopric he did not get; there he failed. For the coach-and-four he was more fortunate. At the very latest period

of his life, when the shades of death were fast gathering about him, he found himself able to indulge in this luxury; and as his time was obviously short, he wisely resolved to make the most of it; and upon any or no excuse, the Doctor was to be seen flying over the land at full gallop, and scouring town and country with four clerical-looking long-tailed horses. We believe he even meditated a medal, commemorating his first ovation by a faithful portrait of the coach and his own episcopal wig in their meridian pomp. He might have been represented in the act of looking out of the window, and "inflicting his eye" upon some hostile parson picking his way through the mud on foot. On the whole, I really rejoice that the Doctor got his coach and his four resounding coursers. The occasional crack of the whip must have sounded pleasantly in his ears at a period when he himself had ceased to operate with that weapon—when he was no more than an *emeritus* professor—and could be saluted no longer as Samuel μαστιγοφορος.* So far was well; but still, I ask, how came it that his coach panels wanted their appropriate heraldic decoration? How was it that he missed the mitre? Late in life, I find him characterising himself as an "unpreferred, calumniated, half-starving country parson;" no part of which, indeed, was true: but yet I demand—how was it that any colourable plea existed, at that time of his career, to give one moment's plausibility to such an exaggeration? Let us consider.

Dr Parr was the son of a country practitioner in the humbler departments of medicine. Parr, senior, practised as a surgeon, apothecary, and accoucheur. From him,

* The *scourge-bearer:* this is the epithet applied to the lunatic Telamonian Ajax by Sophocles.

therefore, his son could expect little assistance in his views of personal aggrandisement. But *that* was not necessary. An excellent Latin scholar, and a man who brought the rare sanction (sanctification, I was going to say) of clerical countenance to so graceless a party as the Whigs, who in those days had scarcely a professional friend to say grace at their *symposia*, must, with any reasonable discretion in the conduct of his life, have been by much too valuable a resource on the Whig establishment to run any risk of neglect. The single clerk, the one sole *reverend* man of letters, who was borne upon their books, must have had a priceless value in the eyes of that faction, when "taking stock," and estimating their alliances. To them he must have been what the *Emperor of Morocco* is to the collector of butterflies. To have lost this value, to have forfeited his hold upon their gratitude, and actually to have depreciated as he grew older and better known to the world, implies too significantly some gross misconduct, or some rueful indiscretions. The truth is this—and for Parr's own honour, lest worse things should be thought of him than the case really warrants, his friends ought to make it known—though a man of integrity, he could not be relied upon; in a muster of forces, he was one of the few that never could be absolutely reckoned on and made sure of. Neither did his scruples obey any known law; he could swallow a camel, and strain at a gnat; and his caprice was of the most dangerous kind,—not a woman's caprice, which is the mere mantling of levity, and readily enough obeys any fresh impulse, which it is often easy to apply in an opposite direction. Dr Parr's caprices grew upon another stock; they were the fitful outbreaks of steady, mulish wrong-headedness; products of a blind belief that, in order to show his independence now and then, like a true mule,

he must lie down with his burden at some critical point of the road, and refuse to budge an inch farther. This was a constitutional taint, for which he was indebted to the accoucheur. That original old mule overruled his son to the end of his long life, and controlled his reiterated opportunities of a certain and brilliant success, by the hereditary taint in the blood which he transmitted to him, in more perhaps than its original strength. The true name for this infirmity is, in the vulgar dialect, *pig-headedness*. Stupid imperturbable adherence, deaf and blind, to some perverse view that abruptly thwarted and counteracted his party, making his friends stare, and his opponents laugh—*that* was the key to Dr Parr's lingering preferment. And I believe, upon a considerate view of his whole course, that he threw away ten times the amount of fortune, rank, splendour, and influence that he ever obtained, and with no countervailing indemnity from any moral reputation, such as would have attended all consistent sacrifices to high-minded principle. On the contrary, with harsh opposition and expressions of powerful disgust from friends in every quarter, all conscious that, in such instances of singularity, Dr Parr was merely obeying a demon, that now and then mastered him, of wayward, restive, moody self-conceit, or else the blind spirit of contradiction. Most of us know a little of such men, and occasionally suffer by such men in the private affairs of life—men that are unusually jealous of slights, or insufficient acknowledgments of their personal claims and consequence; they require to be courted, petted, caressed; they refuse to be compromised or *committed* by the general acts of their party; they must be specially consulted, else they read a lesson to the whole party on their error, by some shocking and revolting act of sudden desertion, which,

from a person of different character, would have been received as perfidy. Dr Johnstone himself admits, that Parr was "jealous of attention, and indignant at neglect;" and on one occasion endeavours to explain a transaction of his life, by supposing that he may have been "hurried away by one of those torrents of passion, of which there are too many instances in *his* life." Of the father, Parr obstetrical, the same indulgent biographer remarks, that he was "distinguished by the rectitude of his principles," and in another place he pronounces him, in summing up his character, to have been "an honest, well-meaning Tory;" but, at the same time, confesses him to have been "the petty tyrant of his fireside,"—an amiable little feature of character that would go far to convince his own family that "rectitude of principles" was not altogether incompatible with the practice of a ruffian.

Tory, however, Parr, senior, was *not:* he was a Jacobite, probably for the gratification of his spleen, and upon a conceit that this arrayed him in a distinct personal contest with the House of Hanover; whereas, once confounded amongst the prevailing party of friends to that interest, as a man-midwife, he could hardly hope to win the notice of His Britannic Majesty. His faction, however, being beaten to their hearts' content, and his own fortune all going overboard in the storm, he suddenly made a bolt to the very opposite party—he ratted to the red-hot Whigs; and the circumstances of the case, which are as we have here stated them, hardly warrant us in putting a very favourable construction upon his motives. As was the father, such was the son: the same right of rebellion reserved to himself, whether otherwise professing himself Jacobite or Whig; the same peremptory duty of passive obedience for those of his household; the same hot intem-

perances in politics; the same disdain of accountableness to his party leaders; and, finally, the same "petty tyranny of the fireside." This last is a point on which all the biographers are agreed: they all record the uncontrollable ill temper and hasty violence of Dr Parr within his domestic circle. And one anecdote, illustrating his intemperance, I can furnish myself. On one occasion, rising up from table, in the middle of a fierce discussion with Mrs Parr, he took a carving-knife, and applying it to a portrait of that lady, hanging upon the wall, he drew it sharply across the jugular, and cut the throat of the picture from ear to ear; thus murdering her in effigy.

This view of Parr's intractable temper is necessary to understand his life, and in some measure to justify his friends. Though not (as he chose himself to express it, under a momentary sense of his slow progress in life, and the reluctant blossoming of his preferment) "a half-starved parson," yet most unquestionably he reaped nothing at all from his long attachment to Whiggery, by comparison with what he would have reaped had that attachment been more cordial and unbroken, and had he, in other respects, borne himself with more discretion, and, above all, had he abstained from offensive personalities. This was a rock on which Parr often wrecked himself. Things, and principles, and existing establishments, might all have been attacked with even more virulence than he exhibited, had his furious passions allowed him to keep his hands off the persons of individuals. Here lay one class of the causes which retarded his promotion. Another was his unbecoming warfare upon his own Church. "I am sorry," said one of his earliest, latest, and wisest friends (Bishop Bennet)—"I am sorry you attack the Church, for fear of consequences to your own advancement." This was said

in 1792. Six years later, Bennet, who had a confidential post in the Irish Government, and saw the dreadful crisis to which things were hurrying—viz., at a moment when two formidable insurrections were impending—found it necessary to break off all intercourse with Dr Parr; so shocking to a man of principle was the careless levity with which this minister of peace, and his immediate associates, themselves in the bosom of security amongst the woods of Warwickshire, scattered their firebrands of inflammatory language through the public, at a period of so much awful irritation. Afterwards, it is true, that when the Irish crisis had passed, and the rebellion was suppressed, Bennet's respect for Parr as a scholar led him to resume his correspondence. But he never altered his opinion of Parr as a politician; he viewed him as a man profoundly ignorant in politics, a mere Parson Adams in the knowledge of affairs, and the real springs of political action or political influence; but unfortunately, with all the bigotry and violent irritability that belong to the most excited and interested partisan; having the headlong passions of a mob united with the ignorance of the desert; coupling the timid simplicity of the dove with the fierce instincts of the serpent.

The events of his life moved under this unhappy influence. Leaving college prematurely upon the misfortune of his father's death, he became an assistant at Harrow under the learned Dr Sumner. About five years after, on Dr Sumner's death, though manifestly too young for the situation, he entered into a warm contest for the vacant place of head-master. Notwithstanding the support of Lord Dartmouth and others, he lost it, and unfortunately for his peace of mind; though fancying, as usual, all sorts of intrigues against himself; yet, in the real circumstances of the election, he was not able to detect one

argument of injustice. The pretensions of Benjamin Heath, his successful competitor, were such as to disabuse all the world of any delusive conceit that justice had not been done. Parr, it must be remembered, then only twenty-five years old, had in no single instance distinguished himself; nor had he, even fifty years after—no, nor at the day of his death—given any evidences to the world that he was comparable to Heath as a Grecian. The probable ground of Heath's success was a character better fitted to preside over a great school (for even the too friendly biographers of Parr admit that he did not command the respect of the boys), and his better established learning. Naturally enough, Parr was unwilling to admit these causes, so advantageous to his rival, as the true ones. What, then, is *his* account of the matter? He says, that he lost the election by a vote which he had given to John Wilkes, in his contest for Middlesex. To John Wilkes—mark *that*, reader! Thus early had this "gowned student" engaged his passions and his services in the interest of brawling, intriguing faction.

This plan failing, he set up a rival establishment in the neighbourhood of Harrow, at Stanmore; and never, certainly, did so young a man, with so few of the ordinary guarantees to offer—that is to say, either property, experience, or connections—meet with such generous assistance. One friend lent him £2000 at two per cent., though his security must obviously have been merely personal. Another lent him £200 without any interest at all. And many persons of station and influence, amongst whom was Lord Dartmouth, gave him a sort of countenance equally useful to his interests, by placing their sons under his care. All came to nothing, however; the establishment was knocked up, and clearly from

gross defects of management. And had his principal creditor pressed for repayment, or had he shown less than the most generous forbearance, which he continued through twenty-one years (in fact, until the repayment was accomplished without distress), Parr must have been ruined; for in those days there was no merciful indulgence of the laws to hopeless insolvents; unless by the favour of their creditors, they were doomed to rot in prison. Now, in this one story we have two facts illustrated, bearing upon our present inquiry—first, the extraordinary good luck of Parr; secondly, his extraordinary skill in neutralising or abusing it.

What young man, that happens to be penniless at the age of twenty-five, untried in the management of money, untried even as the *presiding* master in a school, would be likely to find a friend willing to intrust him, on his personal responsibility (and with no prospect for the recovery of his money, except through the tardy and uncertain accumulation of profits upon an opposition school), with so large a sum as £2000? Who, in an ordinary way, could count upon the support of a nobleman enjoying the ear and confidence of royalty? Lastly, who would so speedily defeat and baffle, by his own unassisted negligence and flagrant indiscretions, so much volunteer bounty? At this time of his life, it strikes me, in fact, that Dr Parr was mad. The students at Stanmore were indulged in all sorts of irregularities. *That*, perhaps, might arise from the unfortunate situation of the new establishment—too near to its rival; and in part, also, from the delicate position of Parr, who, in most instances, had come under an unfortunate personal obligation to the young gentlemen who followed him from Harrow. But in his habits of dress and deportment, which drew scandal

upon himself, and jealousy upon his establishment, Parr owed his ill success to nobody but himself. Mr Roderick, his assistant, and a most friendly reporter, says, that at this time he "brought upon himself the ridicule of the neighbourhood and passengers by many foolish acts; such as riding in high prelatical pomp through the streets on a black saddle, bearing in his hand a long cane or wand, such as women used to have, with an ivory head *like a crosier*, which was probably the reason why he liked it." We see by this he was already thinking of the bishopric. "At other times he was seen stalking through the town in a dirty striped morning-gown: *Nil fuit unquam sic impar sibi.*" When we add, that Dr Parr soon disgusted and alienated his weightiest friend amongst the residents at Stanmore—viz., Mr Smith, the accomplished rector of the place—we cannot wonder that little more than five years saw that scheme at an end.

The school at Stanmore he could not be said to leave; it left *him:* such was his management, that no fresh pupils succeeded to those whom the progress of years carried off to the universities. When this wavering rushlight had at length finally expired, it became necessary to think of other plans, and in the spring of 1777 he accepted the mastership of Colchester School. Even there, brief as his connection was with that establishment, he found time to fasten a quarrel upon the trustees of the school in reference to a lease; and upon this quarrel he printed (though he did not publish) a pamphlet. Sir William Jones, his old schoolfellow, to whom, as a lawyer, this pamphlet was submitted, found continual occasion to mark upon the margin such criticisms as these, "*too violent—too strong.*" This was probably the mildest mode of telling Dr Sam that he was growing libellous.

But, luckily, he was soon called away from these miserable feuds to a more creditable sort of activity. In the summer of 1778, the mastership of the public Grammar School at Norwich became vacant: in the autumn, Parr was elected; and in the beginning of 1779 he commenced his residence in that city. Thus we see that he was unusually befriended in all his undertakings. As a private speculator at Stanmore, as a candidate for Colchester, as a candidate for Norwich, he was uniformly successful, as far as it is possible that encouragement the most liberal, on the part of others, can overrule a man's own imprudence. The mastership of Norwich has certainly been considered a valuable prize by others. How it happened that Parr found it otherwise, or whether mere restlessness and love of change were his governing impulses, does not appear; but it is certain, that in August, 1785, he sent in his resignation; and at Easter, 1786, he went to reside at the parsonage house of Hatton, in the County of Warwick, where he opened a private academy. And though, as old age advanced, he resigned his pupils, Hatton continued to be his place of residence.

This, then, was the haven, the perpetual curacy of Hatton, into which Dr Parr steered his little boat, when he had already passed the meridian of his life. And (except upon a visit) he never again left it for any more elevated abode. For a philosopher, we grant that a much happier situation cannot be imagined than that of an English rural parson, rich enough to maintain a good library. Dr Parr was exactly in those circumstances: but Dr Parr was no philosopher. And assuredly this was not the vision which floated before his eyes at Stanmore, when he was riding on his "black saddle," in prelatical pomp, with his ivory crosier in his fist. The coach-and-four and

mitred panels must then have flourished in the foreground of the picture. But at that time he was between twenty-five and thirty; now he was turned forty—an age when, if a man should not have made his fortune, at least he ought to see clearly before him the road by which it *is to be* made. Now what was Parr's condition at this time, in respect to that supreme object of his exertions? We have no letter on that point in this year, 1786; but we have one in 1782, when it does not appear possible that his situation was materially different. Writing to a man whom he valued, but then under a cloud of distress, and perhaps wishing to excuse himself for not sending him money, he thus states the result of his labours up to that date:—"You desire my confidence; and I therefore add, that the little progress I have made in worldly matters, the heavy loss I have sustained by the war, the inconsiderable advantages I have gained by a laborious and irksome employment, and the mortifying discouragements I have met with in my clerical profession, have all conspired to depress my spirits and undermine my constitution. I was content to give up ecclesiastical preferment, while I had a prospect of making some comfortable provision for my old age in my business as a teacher; but the best of my years have now elapsed, and I am, through a most vexatious and trying series of events, not a shilling richer than when I went to Stanmore. I have this very week closed an account, on which I stood indebted near £2000, which I was obliged to borrow when I launched into active life. My house at Stanmore I sold literally for less money than I expended on the repairs only. To this loss of more than £1000, I am to add near £700, which I *may* lose entirely, and *must* lose in a great measure, by the reduction of St Vincent and St Kitt's. My patience, so

far as religion prescribes it, is sufficient to support me under this severity of moral trial. But the hour is past in which I might hope to secure a comfortable independency; and I am now labouring under the gloomy prospect of toiling, with exhausted strength, for a scanty subsistence to myself and my family. It is but eighteen months that I could pronounce a shilling my own. Now, indeed, *meo sum pauper in ære* [though poor, I am without debt]—but my integrity I have ever held fast."

Possibly; but integrity might also have been held fast in a deanery; and certainly Dr Parr will not pretend to hoax us with such a story, as that "integrity" was all that he contemplated from his black saddle in Stanmore. Undoubtedly, he framed to himself some other good things, so fortunately arranged, that they could be held *in commendam* with integrity. Such, however, was the naked fact, and I am sorry for it, at the time when Dr Parr drew near to his fortieth year—at which age, as all the world knows, a man must be a fool if he is not a physician; and a physician for mind, body, and estate. Pass on, reader, for the term of almost another generation: suppose Dr Parr to be turned of sixty, and the first light snows of early old age to be just beginning to descend upon him, and his best wig to be turning grey;—were matters, we ask, improved at that time? Not much. Twenty years from that Easter on which he had entered the gates of Hatton—viz., in 1806–7—had brought him within hail of a bishopric; for his party were just then in power. Already he could descry his sleeves and his rochet; already he could count the pinnacles of his cathedral;—when suddenly Mr Fox died, and his hopes evanesced in spiral wreaths of fuming Orinoco. Unfortunate Dr Parr! Once before he had conceived himself within an inch of

the mitre; *that* was in the king's first illness, when the regency intrigue gave hopes, at one time, that Mr Pitt would be displaced. Dr Parr had then been summoned up to London; and he had gone so far as to lay down rules for his episcopal behaviour. But the king suddenly recovered; many a grasping palm was then relaxed abruptly; and, alas! for Dr Parr, whether people died or recovered, the event was equally unfortunate. Writing, on August 25, 1807, to the Bishop of Down, he says, "If Mr Fox had lived and continued in power, he certainly would have made me a bishop." Now if Dr Parr meant to say that he had a distinct promise to that effect, that certainly is above guessing; else I should almost presume to guess, that Mr Fox neither would, nor possibly could, have made Dr Parr a bishop. It is true that Mr Fox meant to have promoted the Bishop of Llandaff of that day, who might seem to stand in the same circumstances as a literary supporter; at least Lord Holland said to a friend of mine, "Had our party remained in office, we should have raised the Bishop of Llandaff to the Archbishopric of York." But then why? Lord Holland's reason was this—"For he" (meaning Dr Watson) "behaved very well, I can assure you, to us" (meaning by *us* the whole Fox and Grenville coalition). Now, this reason (I fear) did not apply, in Mr Fox's mind, to Dr Parr; he had behaved violently, indiscreetly, foolishly, on several occasions; he had thoroughly disgusted all other parties; he had not satisfied his own. And once, when, upon a very frivolous reason, he gave a vote for Mr Pitt at the Cambridge election, I am satisfied myself that he meditated the notable policy of ratting; conceiving, perhaps, that he would be cherishing a romantic punctilio of honour in adhering to a doomed party; and the letter of Lord John

Townshend on that occasion convinces me that the Whigs viewed this very suspicious act in that light. Even Dr Johnstone, I observe, doubts whether Mr Fox would have raised Dr Parr to the mitre; and as to everybody else, they shuddered at his very name. The Chancellor, Lord Thurlow, gave him a hearty curse, *more suo*, instead of a prebend; and Lord Grenville assigned, as a reason against making him a bishop, his extreme unpopularity with his own order. As one proof of that, even the slight distinction of preaching a visitation sermon had never once been offered to Dr Parr, so he himself tells us, in 1816, when he had completed his seventieth year, notwithstanding he had held preferment in five different counties. Nor was it, in fact, offered for six years more; and then, being a hopeful young gentleman of seventy-six, he thought proper to decline the invitation.

Next, for the emoluments of his profession—Was he better off, as regards *them*? Else, whence came the coach-and-four? I answer, that, by mere accidents of good luck, and the falling-in of some extraordinary canal profits, Dr Parr's prebend in the cathedral of St Paul's, given to him by Bishop Lowth upon the interest of Lord Dartmouth, produced him in his last year or two an unusually large sum; so that he had about £3000 a-year; and I am glad of it. He had also an annuity of £300 a-year, granted by the Dukes of Norfolk and Bedford in consideration of a subscription made for Dr Parr, by his political friends. But this was a kind of charity which would hardly have been offered, had it not been felt that in the regular path of his profession he had not drawn, nor was likely to draw, any conspicuous prizes. In fact, but for the two accidents I have mentioned, his whole regular income from the Church, up to a period of advanced age, when Sir Francis

Burdett presented him to a living of about £200 per annum, was £93 on account of his living, and £17 on account of his prebend.

Such were the ecclesiastical honours, and such the regular ecclesiastical emoluments, of Samuel Parr. I do not grudge him the addition, as regards the latter, which, in his closing years, he drew from the liberality of his friends and the accidents of luck. On the contrary, I rejoice that his last days passed in luxury and pomp; that he sent up daily clouds of undulating incense to the skies; and that he celebrated his birth-day regularly with ducal game and venison from the parks of princes; finally, I rejoice that he galloped about in his coach-and-four, and am not angry that, on one occasion, he nearly galloped over myself.

Still, I rejoice that all these luxuries came to him irregularly, and not at all, or (if at all) indirectly, and by accident, through the Church. As regards *that*, and looking not to the individual, but entirely to the example, I rejoice that, both for her honours and emoluments, Dr Parr missed them altogether. Such be the fate of all unfaithful servants, in whatsoever profession or office of trust! So may *those* be still baffled and confounded, who pass their lives in disparaging and traducing their own honourable brethren; and who labour (whether consciously and from treachery, or half-consciously and from malice and vanity) for the subversion of institutions which they are sworn, pledged, and paid to defend!

My conclusion, therefore, the *epimuthion* of my review, is this—that, considered as a man of the world, keenly engaged in the chase after rank and riches, Dr Parr must be pronounced to have failed; that his rare and late successes

were casual and indirect; whilst his capital failures were due exclusively to himself. His two early bosom friends and schoolfellows, Dr Bennet and Sir W. Jones, he saw raised to the rank of a bishop and a judge—whilst he was himself still plodding as a schoolmaster. And this mortifying distinction in their lots was too obviously imputable, not to any more scrupulous integrity in *him*, soothing as that hypothesis was to his irritated vanity, but solely to his own hotheaded defect of self-control—baffling the efforts of his friends, and neutralising the finest opportunities. Both of those eminent persons, the bishop as well as the judge, deeply disapproved of his conduct; though they agreed in candour, and in the most favourable construction of his meaning; and though they allowed him the largest latitude for his politics—one of them being what is termed a liberal Tory, and the other an ardent Whig. And yet, with the full benefit of this most latitudinarian privilege, he could not win their toleration to his indiscretions. So that, purely by his own folly, and in headstrong opposition to the concurring tendencies of his opportunities and his extra advantages, Samuel Parr failed utterly as an ambitious man of the world. It remains to inquire how much better he succeeded as a politician, a scholar, and a divine.

SECTION II.

READER! perhaps you have heard of churls, who, being embarked in some magnificent ship upon an East India voyage, have manifested no interest at all in the partners of their hopes and hazards. Far be such apathy from

myself and my friends! The merest *poco-curante* or misanthrope, whom long freezing experience of the world has brought to the temper of fixed and contemptuous disregard for man as a species, not seldom makes an exception in favour of the particular John, William, or James, whom accident has embarked in the same enterprise, or associated in the same perils with himself. Dan Dancer, the miser, who would not have risked a half-crown upon a fire-escape or a life-boat for ten generations whom he had not personally known, nevertheless fought the battles of the paupers in his own neighbourhood, and headed them in their campaigns for rights of common and turbary with the most disinterested heroism. Elwes, the prince of misers, sometimes laid aside his narrow cares for the duties of a patriot. No man so memorably selfish, who has not, on some occasion of his life, felt the social instinct which connects his else contemptible race, and acknowledged the duties which grow out of it. As to the good and generous, they cannot travel so much as a Jewish Sabbath-day's journey in company with another, participating in common purposes for the time, and liable to common inconveniences of weather or accident, and even to common possibilities of danger, without recognising something beyond a stranger's claim to offices of kindness or courtesy in the transient relations of a fellow-traveller.

Yet these are, in their nature, felt to be perishable connections. Neighbourhood is a relation either purely of accident, or of choice not primarily determined by consideration of neighbours. And the brief associations of public carriages or inns are as evanescent as the sandy columns of the Great Desert, which the caprices of the wind build up and scatter, shape and unshape, within the brief revolution of a minute. Seldom, indeed, does

a second sun shine upon fellow-travellers in modern England. And neighbourhood, if a more durable tie, is often one even less consciously made known to the parties concerned. If, then, connections casual as these, where the *vinculum* of the relation is so finely spun as to furnish rather a verbal classification to the logician than a practical subject of duties to the moralist, are yet acknowledged by the benevolent as imposing some slight obligations of consideration and service, much more ought an AUTHOR to find, in the important circumstances which connect the ministers of the press, in their extensive fellowship of duties, rights, powers, interests, and necessities, a bond of fraternal alliance, and more than fraternal sympathy. Too true it is, that authors are sometimes blockheads, and by the remotest of possibilities even knaves. Too commonly it happens that, in the occasions and the motives which originally drew them into authorship, there is little or nothing to command respect. *Venter largitor ingenî*—the stomach, that keen developer of talent—is the great feeder of the metropolitan press; and amongst the few who commence authors upon arguments less gross and instant, there are not many who do so from impulses that are exclusively noble.

Considerations such as these are at war with all sentiments of regard for the mere hacks of the press, who, having no *natural* summons to so fine a vocation, pervert literature—the noblest of professions—into the vilest of trades. But wherever *that* is not *primâ facie* presumable, wherever circumstances allow us to suppose that a man has taken up the office of author with adequate pretensions, and a proper sense of his responsibilities, every other author of generous nature will allow him the benefit of that privilege which all over the world attaches to co-

membership in any craft, calling, or guild whatsoever—even those which are illiberal or mechanical; *à fortiori* in those which are intellectual. Surgeons bleed surgeons for love, physicians assassinate physicians gratis. Superannuated actors are everywhere free, I believe, of the theatre. And an author who has exercised his craft in a liberal, courteous, and honourable spirit, is entitled in that character to the indulgence of all professional authors, and above all he is entitled to entire amnesty as respects his politics. These are claims which I cheerfully allow to Trojan and Tyrian—to Whig and Tory alike; and I come to the consideration of Dr Parr as a scholar and as an author with perfect freedom from all prejudice, anxious to give him the fullest benefit of his real merits, and dismissing all unpleasant recollections of that factious and intemperate character which, most superfluously, he put forward in politics and divinity

Dr Parr as an author! That very word in my ear sounds ridiculous, apart from every question upon the quality or value of what he wrote. As a literary man, as a scholar, prepared by reading and research for appreciating a considerable proportion of the past or the current literature, Dr Parr, I willingly concede, stood upon somewhat higher ground than the great body of his clerical brethren. But even this I say with hesitation; for it is scarcely to be believed, except by those who have gone with an observing eye into English society, how many rural clergymen go down to their graves unheard of by the world, and unacquainted with the press, unless perhaps by some anonymous communication to a magazine, or by an occasional sermon—who have beguiled the pains of life by researches unusually deep into some neglected or unpopular branches of professional learning. Such

persons, it is true, are in general unequally learned; so indeed are most men; so, beyond all men, was Dr Parr. I do not believe that he possessed any one part of knowledge accurately, unless it were that section of classical learning which fell within his province as a schoolmaster. The practice of a long life naturally made him perfect in that—perfect, at least, in relation to the standard of that profession. But how small a part of classical researches lie within the prescriptive range of a practising schoolmaster! The duties of an academic professor may have a wider compass; but it must be a pure labour of supererogation in a teacher of any school for boys, if he should make his cycle of study very comprehensive. Even within that cycle, as at this time professed by some first-rate teachers, was Dr Parr master of everything? In some of its divisions was he even master of anything? For example, how much did he know—has he left it upon record, in any one note, exegetical or illustrative, upon any one obscure or disputed passage of any one classic, that he knew anything at all in the vast and interminable field of classical antiquities? The formulæ of the Roman calendar were, of course, known to him as a writer of Latin epitaphs; for the chronology of the grave, as I shall have occasion to notice a little further ahead, has its own special varieties of delicate scientific caprice. But these niceties are soon learned from Morcellus. And even on that subject—even on the practical applications of chronology to the usages of daily life, or to the severe requisitions of law—was Dr Parr the learned man that common fame reputed him to be? To take one case amongst a thousand, when the year 1800 brought up a question* in

* "*Brought up a question:*"—Which question was virtually again brought up by the year 1850: are we to regard that year *last* of the *first*

its train—[was it to be considered the last year of the eighteenth century, or the first of the nineteenth?]—did Dr Parr come forward with an oracular determination of our scruples, or did he silently resign that pleading to the humble hands of the laureate—Pye? Or again, shifting from questions of time to those of space, has Dr Parr contributed so much as his mite to the very interesting, important, and difficult subject of classical geography? Yet these were topics which lay within his beat as a schoolmaster. If we should come upon the still higher ground of divinity and Christian antiquities, perhaps upon those it might appear that Dr Parr had absolutely no pretensions at all. But not to press such questions too closely or invidiously, whatever might be the amount of his attainments under these heads, were it little or were it much, scanty as the measure of my faith in them, or co-extensive with the vaunts of his friends—still all this has reference only to his general capacity as a man of letters; whereas we are called upon to consider Dr Parr also as an author. Indeed we have now no other means for estimating his *posse* as a scholar, than through his *esse* as a writer for the press.

This is my task; and this it is which moves my mirth, whilst it taxes the worthy Doctor and his friends with a spirit of outrageous self-delusion. Dr Parr as an author! And what, now, might happen to be the Doctor's works? For I protest, upon my honour, that I never heard their names. Was ever case like this? Here is a learned doctor, whose learned friend has brought him forward as a first-rate author of his times, and yet nothing is extant of his writing, beyond an occasional preface, or a pamphlet

bisection in the nineteenth century, or *first* of the *last* bisection? And every fifty years the same exact question will recur.

on private squabbles. But are not his *Opera Omnia* collected and published by this friendly biographer, and expanded into eight enormous tomes? True; and the eight tomes contain, severally, the following hyperbolical amount of pages:—

		PAGES.
Vol.	I.	850
...	II.	701
...	III.	715
...	IV.	718
...	V.	715
...	VI.	699
...	VII.	680
...	VIII.	656
	Total	5734

Yes! five thousand seven hundred and thirty-four octavo pages, many of them printed in a small type, are the apparent amount of Samuel Parr's works in the edition of Dr Johnstone; and it is true, besides, that the very *élite* of his papers is omitted—such as his critical notices of books in the Monthly and Critical Reviews, or the "British Critic," and his essay on the word *Sublime*, addressed to Mr Dugald Stewart. Add what is omitted, and the whole would be little short of seven thousand pages. And yet, spite of that, not one "*work*" of Dr Parr's is extant, which can, without laughter, assume that important name. The preface to Bellenden is, after all, by much the weightiest and most regular composition, and the least of a fugitive tract. Yet this is but a *jeu d'esprit*, or classical prolusion. And I believe the case to be unexampled, that, upon so slender a basis, a man of the world, and reputed a man of sense, should set up for an author. Well might the author of the "Pursuits of Literature" (1797) demand—"What has Dr Parr written? A sermon or two, rather long; a Latin preface to Bellendenus (rather long too), consisting of a

cento of Latin and Greek expressions, applied to political subjects; another preface to some English Tracts; and two or three English pamphlets about his own private quarrels: and this man is to be compared with Dr Samuel Johnson!!"

Certainly the world had never before seen so great a pomp of pretension rising from so slight a ground. The delusion was absolutely unrivalled, and prevailed throughout Dr Parr's long life. He and his friends seemed constantly to appeal to some acknowledged literary reputation, established upon foundations that could not be shaken, and notorious to all the world. Such a mistake, and in that extent, was never heard of before. Dr Parr talked, and his friends listened, not only as giving and receiving oracles of moral wisdom, but of wisdom owned to be such by all the world; whereas, this *auctoritas* (to borrow a Roman word for its Roman sense), whether secretly due to the Doctor or not, evidently could not exist as a fact, unless according to the weight and popularity of published works, by which the world had been taught to know him and to rank him. Starting originally from the erroneous assumption insinuated by his preposterous self-conceit, that he was Johnson redivivus, he adopted Johnson's colloquial pretensions—and that was vainglorious folly; but he also conceived that these pretensions were familiarly recognised—and that was frenzy. To Johnson, as a known master in a particular style of conversation—not the very best within the whole classified range of styles, not the most difficult, not the most instructive, but a finished specimen of its particular kind—everybody gave way; and upon all questions with *moral* bearings he was supposed to have the rights and precedency of a judicial chair. But this prerogative he had held in right of his works; works, not which he merely *ought* to have

written (see Dr Johnstone's "Memoirs of Parr," p. 464), but which he *had* written, printed, and published. Strange that Dr Parr should overlook so obvious a distinction! Yet he *did* so for fifty years. Dining, for instance, at Norfolk House, the duke having done him the honour to invite him to the same table with the Prince of Wales, such was his presumption in the presence of the heir-apparent, of the premier peer of England, and of all the illustrious leaders from the Opposition side of the two Houses, that he fully believed it to be his vocation to stand forward as the spokesman of the company: It gave him no check, it suggested no faltering scruple, that Mr Fox was on one side the table, and Sheridan on the other. His right he conceived it to be to play the foremost part, and to support the burden of conversation between his royal highness and the splendid party assembled to meet him. Accordingly, on some casual question arising as to the comparative merits of Bishop Hurd and Archbishop Markham as Greek scholars, in which the prince delivered a plain and sensible evidence in favour of the latter, from facts of his own youthful experience, Parr strutted forward, with the mingled license of Jacobinism and paradox, to maintain a thesis against him. "I," said the Prince of Wales, "esteem Markham a much greater, wiser, and more learned man than Hurd, and a better teacher; and you will allow me to be a judge, for they were both my preceptors." Here was a direct opinion; and the prince afterwards gave reasons for it equally direct. A simple answer, as brief as the original position, was all that good breeding or etiquette allowed. But Dr Parr found an occasion for a *concio*, and prepared to use it. "Sir," said he, "is it your royal highness's pleasure that I should enter upon the topic of their comparative merits as a

subject of discussion."—"*Yes*," said the prince.—"Then, sir," said Dr Parr, "I differ entirely from your royal highness in opinion." One would suppose by his formal preparation, that Dr Parr was some sergeant-at-law rising to argue a case before the judges at Westminster. The prince, however, had permitted him to proceed: under the special appeal made to him, what else could he do? And, by way of acknowledging this courteous allowance, with the true soul of a low-bred democrat, Parr starts with a point-blank contradiction of his royal highness, put as broadly and coarsely as he knew how.

Perhaps there are not ten men in Europe, occupying at the time no higher station than that of *country* schoolmaster, who would have had the front—in the presence of the Prince of Wales, or the Dauphin of France—to step before the assembled wits of Paris or London, and the great leaders of parties, as the rightful claimant of the royal ear, and natural representative of the illustrious party assembled at Norfolk House—all distinguished by high birth, talents, or station. Brass, triply bronzed, was requisite for this. "Thou art the great toe of this society; because that thou, being lowest, basest, meanest, still goest foremost." Arrogance towards his fellow-claimants was not enough for Dr Parr, unless he might also be arrogant towards the prince. In high-bred society, all disputation whatsoever—nay, all continued discussion—is outrageously at war with the established tone of conversation; a dispute must be managed with much more brilliancy, much more command of temper, a much more determinate theme, and a much more obvious progress towards a definite result in the question at issue, than are commonly found—not to prove grievously annoying to all persons present, except the two disputants. High-breed-

ing and low-breeding differ not more in the degrees of refinement which characterise their usages, than in the good sense upon which these usages have arisen. Certainly, mere good sense is sufficient, without any experience at all of high life, to point out the intolerable absurdity of allowing two angry champions to lock up and sequestrate, as it were, the whole social enjoyment of a large party, and compel them to sit "in sad civility" witnesses of a contest which can interest the majority neither by its final object nor its management. *Social* pleasure is the end and purpose of society; and whatsoever interferes with that should be scourged out of all companies. But, if disputing be intolerable, what shall we say of blank contradiction offered to a Prince of Wales—not in prosecution of some point of public service, but as an elegant condiment to the luxuries of colloquial intercourse. To turn your back upon the king, to put a question to him, to pull out your watch in his presence—all these are notorious trespasses against the etiquette of courts, and reasonably so; because they are all habits which presuppose a carelessness of demeanour incompatible with that reverence and decorous homage which should never slumber in the presence of a king, considered not as an individual, but as a state creature, embodying the majesty of a great nation. A Prince of Wales, or whosoever occupies that near relation to the throne, has the same sanctity of public character; and a man of sense, though a red-hot republican from the banks of the Potomac, would as little allow himself to forget *that*, as to insult a judge upon the bench. It is not the prince as an individual that is considered, but the prince as representative of a great nation; it is not the judge personally that is regarded, but the sanctities of law and justice.

Had the matter in dispute been some great question of constitutional policy, or in any way applicable to the prince's future behaviour in life, or in many other circumstances that might be imagined, we can suppose a sort of propriety in the very breach of propriety. But the question was, in this case, too trivial to justify the least eccentricity of manner. He who courts the character of an *abnormis sapiens* (an *uncouth rustic philosopher*), should be careful that his indecorums and singularity cover some singular strength of character or some weight of fine sense. As it was, Dr Parr was paradoxical and apparently in the wrong; the prince direct and rational. With what disadvantage to Dr Parr, on this occasion, and afterwards in his relation to Queen Caroline, do we recall the simple dignity of Dr Johnson, when presented to George III.! Dr Parr's introduction was at a dinner-table: Dr Johnson's in a library; and in their separate styles of behaviour, one might fancy each to have been governed by the presiding genius of the place. Johnson behaved with the dignity of a scholar and a loyal son of the Muses, under the inspiration of "strong book-mindedness;" Parr with the violence of a pedagogue under the irritations of wine and indigestion. In reality, Dr Parr's effrontery was chiefly to be traced to that one fact in his life—that for forty years he swayed the sceptre of a pedagogue. Native arrogance was the root; but the "bright consummate flower" was unfolded and matured by his long reign as a tyrant over schoolboys. To borrow his own words with one slight omission, in speaking of a Cambridge head, his "manners and temper were spoiled by the pedantries, and pomposities, and fooleries which accompany the long exercise of petty archididaschalian authority."

"*Archididaschalian authority!*" Thanks to Dr Parr for

one, at least, of his sesquipedalian words; for *that* one contains the key to his whole life, and to the else mysterious fact—that a pamphleteer, a party pamphleteer, a pamphleteer in the service of private brawls, trod the stage, on all occasions, with the air of some great patriarch of letters or polemic champion of the Church. Who could believe that Dr Parr's friend and biographer, in the very act of publishing eight volumes, entitled "*Works* of Dr Parr," should yet have no better answer to the contemptuous demand from the "Pursuits of Literature"—"What has Dr Parr written?"—than simply an expression of regret (vol. i., p. 464), "that with such powers, and such means of gathering information from every quarter, Dr Parr did NOT produce some great work on some great subject." He goes on to lament that Parr did not, "like Clarendon, give the history of that awful period of which he saw the springtide, and in part the issue; or, like Burnet, that he did not relate, in a familiar manner, the transactions of the period in which he lived; or, like Tacitus, paint in caustic and living colours the atrocities, of some of which he was a witness, and deliver, as an everlasting memorial to posterity, the characters of those who bore a part in them." But, with submission, Posterity are a sort of people whom it is very difficult to get at; whatever other good qualities Posterity may have, accessibility is not one of them. A man may write eight octavos, specially addressed to Posterity, and get no more hearing from the wretches, than had he been a stock and they been stones. As to those "everlasting memorials" which Dr Johnstone and Thucydides talk of, it is certainly advisable to "deliver" them—but troublesome and injurious to the digestive organs.

Another biographer, who unites with Dr Johnstone in

lamenting, "that he (viz., Parr) did not undertake some work of a superior kind calculated for permanent utility and more durable fame," goes on in the following terms:—"It is hinted, however, by a periodical writer, that he *could not* produce more creditable works; and for this reason—that he was, as it were, overlaid with acquired knowledge; the flood of his memory burst in on his own original powers and drowned them." But, in that case, I would venture to hope that some *Humane Society*, like that on the banks of the Serpentine, will arise to save hopeful young men from such sad catastrophes; so that "acquired knowledge" may cease to prove so fatal a possession, and native ignorance be no longer a *conditio sine quâ non* for writing "creditable works." Meantime, whatever were the cause, the fact, we see, is admitted by Dr Parr's best friends—that he did not write any great, durable, or creditable work; and the best excuse for him which Dr Johnstone's ingenuity can devise is, that neither Archbishop Markham nor Dean Cyril Jackson wrote anything better. True: but the reason which makes such an excuse not entirely available to the case is this, that neither the archbishop nor the dean arrogated that place and authority in letters which they had not won: they had both been employed in the same sort of labour as Dr Parr; they had severally assisted in the education of a great prince, and they were content with the kind of honour which that procured them. And for Cyril Jackson in particular, he was content with less: for he persisted to the last in declining the mitre which he had earned. No: the simple truth is, as we have stated, that Dr Parr assumed his tone of swagger and self-sufficiency in part, perhaps, from original arrogance of nature, and a confidence which he had in his own powers, but chiefly from a

long life of absolute monarchy within the walls of a school-room. The nature of his empire was absolute and unlimited despotism in the worst form, described by Aristotle in his "Polities" as *Pambasileia*. There is no autocrat so complete, not the Czar of all the Russias, as one or other of these two tyrants—first, the captain of a king's ship, or, secondly, the head-master of a grammar school. Both of them are irresponsible, ἀνυπεύθυνοι, in the utmost degree. And for Parr in particular, not only was he an autocrat, but, if he is not greatly belied, he was a capricious and Algerine tyrant, who went the whole length of his opportunities for showing partial favour, or inflicting vindictive punishment. And he had this peculiarity, that, whilst other tyrants find a present gratification in their severities, but shrink from their contemplation, Parr treated *his* as Plato's suppers—they were luxuries for the moment, and subjects of sweet consolatory exultation in the retrospect. Long after a man had entered the world as an active citizen, Dr Parr used to recall, as the most interesting tie which could connect this man with himself, that at some distant period he had flogged him; and from one biographer it appears that, in proportion to his approbation of a boy, and the hopes with which he regarded him, were the frequency and the severity of his flagellations. To a man who reigned in blood, and banqueted (like Moloch) upon children's cries, we may suppose that resistance was unheard of: and hence, I repeat, the despotic arrogance with which he came abroad before the world. But what, it will be asked, on the side of the public, gave success to this arrogance? How was it that in his lifetime this insolence of assumption prospered? Partly, I answer, through the insolence itself: in all cases that does wonders. The great majority of men are ready

to swear by any man's words, if he does but speak with audacity.

In process of time, however, this resource will fail a man, unless reinforced by auxiliary means; and these I conceive to have lain in two circumstances, without which Parr never would have gained a height so disproportioned to his performances. In the *first* place, Parr was a Whig; and the Whigs, as then the party militant, made much of all who stuck by *them*. Hence the excessive compliments which flowed in upon Dr Parr from Edinburgh, and from persons, such as Dugald Stewart, who had otherwise no particular value for the whole class of Dr Parr's pretensions. The Whigs are wise in their generation; and, like the Dissenters from the Church of England, they make men sensible that it is good to be of their faction; for they never forsake those who adhere faithfully to *them*. Dr Parr, indeed, was rather a slippery partisan; but this was not generally known. His passions carried him always back to Whiggism; and his general attachment was notorious, whilst his little special perfidies or acts of trimming were secrets to all but a very few. A *second* circumstance in the Doctor's favour was this—that, as a schoolmaster, he was throwing into public life a continual stream of pupils, who naturally became partisans and obstinate *proneurs*. In some instances, he educated both father and son; and, though it is true that here and there an eccentric person retains too lively a remembrance of past flagellations, and is with some difficulty restrained from cudgelling or kicking the flagellator, still, as a general case, it may be held that such recollections of the boy do not weigh much in the practice of the man. Most certain it is that, had Dr Parr been other than an active Whig in politics—or had he not been a schoolmaster of ancient and

extensive practice—he never could as a literary man have risen so abruptly above the natural level of his performances as in fact he did. And now that he is dead, and the activity of such adventitious aids is rapidly beginning to fail him, he will sink doubtless even more abruptly to his just standard than ever he rose above it; or, perhaps by the violence of such a natural reaction, will be carried very much below it: *which fate is now* (1857) *realised.*

There is another scale, from which it is probable that some persons may have taken their literary estimate of the Doctor—viz., the scale avoirdupois. For it is very possible that, upon putting the eight volumes of *works* (as edited by Dr Johnstone) on a butcher's steelyard, it may have been ascertained that they draw against a weight of three stone six pounds. Infinite levity in particular cases amounts practically to ruinous gravity; a vast host of fluttering pamphlets, letters, and stray leaves, make up one huge geological boulder. It becomes necessary, therefore, to state the substance of the whole eight volumes. Briefly, then, the account stands thus:—Volume i. contains Memoirs (with some Extracts from Letters). The two last contain Correspondence. Three other volumes contain Sermons: of which two volumes are mere parish discourses, having no more right to a place in a body of literary works than the weekly addresses to his congregation of any other rural clergyman. Thus, out of six volumes, one only is really privileged to take its rank under the general title of the collection. The two remaining volumes (the third and fourth) contain Dr Parr's miscellaneous pamphlets, with some considerable omissions not accounted for by the editor. These two volumes are, in fact, all that can properly be described as of a literary na-

ture: and to these I shall resort for matter in the close of my review.

Meantime, I am satisfied that the correspondence of Dr Parr and his friends, for the very reason that it was written with no view (or no uniform view) to the press, is that part of the whole collection which will be read by the greatest number of readers, and with most interest by all readers. I shall throw a glance on such parts of this correspondence as have a value in reference to the development of Dr Parr's character, or have any separate interest on their own account.

Among the earliest of the literary acquaintances which Dr Parr had the opportunity of forming was that of Dr Johnson. Writing in 1821 (January 6) to Mr Joseph Cradock, who had said a few days before, that perhaps, upon the death of Dr Strahan, he himself "must be the oldest of Dr Johnson's friends, who knew him intimately during the last five or six years of his life," Dr Parr takes occasion to retrace the nature of his own connection with that eminent person:—"Well, dear sir, I sympathise with you in your pleasure and in your pride, when you represent yourself as the oldest remaining scholar who lived upon terms of intimacy with Samuel Johnson. You saw him often, and you met him often, in the presence of Goldsmith, Garrick, Sir Joshua Reynolds, and other literary heroes. I acknowledge the great superiority of your claims. Lord Stowell,* I should suppose, will stand

* "*Lord Stowell:*"—On revising these pages for a generation in advance by more than thirty years of many who are chiefly concerned in their notices, it has become necessary to explain that Lord Stowell, originally Sir William Scott, was the brother of the great Chancellor, Lord Eldon, and equally distinguished as a lawyer, though in a very different field. He was the oracle of the Admiralty Courts; and the business of those courts

in the next place; and I challenge for myself the third. For many years I spent a month's holidays in London, and never failed to call upon Johnson. I was not only admitted, but welcomed. I conversed with him upon numberless subjects of learning, politics, and common life. *I traversed the whole compass of his understanding;* and, by the acknowledgment of Burke and Reynolds, I distinctly understood the peculiar and transcendental properties of his mighty and virtuous mind. I intended to write his life. I laid by sixty or seventy books for the purpose of writing in such a manner as would do no discredit to myself. I intended to spread my thoughts over two volumes quarto; and if I had filled three pages, the rest would have followed. Often have I lamented my *ill fortune* in not building this monument to the fame of Johnson, and (let me not be accused of arrogance when I add) my own."

William Wordsworth, when he dedicated, in a few lines at once modest and dignified, his "Excursion" to the present (now, 1857, the *late*) Lord Lonsdale, with that accurate valuation of words which is one of his greatest poetical accomplishments, offers it as

> "A token—*may it prove* a monument—
> Of honour," &c.

A token, or pledge of his attachment, the poem was, at any rate, by the mere act of dedication; whether it should also be a monument, a monumental token, that was for

being prodigiously enlarged by the war, and by the furious struggle between our British orders in council and the Napoleon decrees issued at Berlin and Milan, naturally it happened that Lord Stowell fell under the widest circle of cognisance, and consequently of hostile (sometimes of malignant) interpretation from the continental publicists and jurists—all to a man bought and paid for by Napoleon. His reputation, at one time most splendid, rests generally upon the expansion which he gave to the principles of international law; and amongst his countrymen, upon the scholar-like elegance and sustained dignity of his judicial style.

posterity to determine; and if others were at liberty to anticipate such a result, the author, at least, was not. And, at all events, the mere logic of the case made it inevitable, that whatever proved a monument to the fame of Dr Johnson should be such also to the fame of him who raised it; for of a structure which should happen to be durable as a record of Dr Johnson, it is mere tautology to say that it must also be durable as the workmanship of Dr Parr. One and the same work could not have a divided character, or a separate destiny, in its different relations; could not be immortal as a record, and at the same time perishable as a memorial of the recorder.

But can it be imagined that Dr Parr's clumsy masonry could raise a monument to anybody? For Dr Johnson, in particular, all that he could have done with effect would have been a short *excursus* or appendix to Boswell, on the pretensions of Johnson as a classical scholar. These were greater than it is the custom to suppose. Dr John Johnstone, indeed, somewhere has thought fit to speak of him in that character as immeasurably inferior to Parr. This is not true. Certainly, I am satisfied that Dr Johnson was no very brilliant Grecian; the haste and trepidation which he showed in declining Dr Burney's application for assistance on the Greek tragedians sufficiently establish *that*. But there is no reason to suppose that, in this part of scholarship, Dr Parr had the least advantage of him: if he had, why are the evidences of his superiority so singularly wanting? or in what corner of forgotten literature are we to seek them? As Latin scholars, both were excellent: Parr, from practice, had the greater command over the delicacies and varieties of prose diction; Johnson, from natural talent, had by much the greater facility in verse. Elaborate ingenuity is far more in request for

metrical purposes in Latin—knowledge of the idiom for prose. It might be shown, indeed, that exquisite facility in the management of thoughts, artifices of condensation or of substitution, of variation or inversion, are for the writer of Latin verse transcendent to any acquaintance with the Latin idiom: the peculiar treatment of an idea, which metre justifies and vindicates from what would else seem affectation, creates its own style. Johnson, in those relics of his Latin verses which have been preserved, benefited by that advantage; Parr, writing in Latin prose, and writing purely as a rhetorician, was taxed in the severest degree for a command over the idiomatic wealth of the language, and, for what is still less to be obtained from dictionaries, for a command over a Latin structure of sentence, and over the subsidiary forms of connection and transition. In the preface to Bellenden, he answered the demand upon him, and displayed very unusual skill in the accomplishments of a Latin scholar. Latin composition, in fact, if we except bell-ringing, was the one sole thing, in the nature of accomplishments, which Dr Parr seems to have possessed. Among the fine arts, certainly, I admit, that he understood bell-ringing thoroughly; and I was on the point of forgetting to add, that in the art of slaughtering oxen,* which he cultivated early as an amateur, his merit was conspicuous. Envy itself was driven to confess it; and none but the blackest-hearted Tory would go about at this time of day to deny it. Still, of these three accomplishments, one only seems available to a biography of Dr Johnson; and that would barely have sufficed for the least important chapter of the work.

* Ταυροκτονειν is the word of Sir W. Jones; but bulls, unless for Pagan sacrificial purposes, were nowhere, and at no time, slaughtered.

After all, was Parr really intimate with Johnson? I doubt it: for he must in that case have submitted to a kind of dissimulation bitter to a proud spirit. He was a Jacobite by inheritance: that would have pleased Dr Johnson well; but then by profession he was a Whig—a sort of monster which the Doctor could not abide, and which he deduced genealogically from Satan; and (worse than that!) he was a Whig renegado—such a combination of monstrous elements in a man's character as none of us can abide. To be a Whig is bad—to be a traitor is bad—but to be a Whig *and* a traitor is too much for humanity. Such features of his character Parr must have dissembled; and this would at once pique his self-love, and limit his power. One anecdote, rich in folly and absurdity, is current about an interview between Johnson and Parr, in which the latter should have stamped whenever the other stamped; and being called upon to explain this sonorous antiphony, replied, that he could not think of allowing his antagonist to be so much as a stamp ahead of him. Miss Seward, I think, was in the habit of telling this story, though Sir Walter Scott has not recorded it in his edition of that lady's works. But she was one of the dealers in marvels, for ever telling of "gigantic powers" and "magnificent displays," in conversation, beyond anything that her heroes were seen to have effected in their writings. I remember well that she used to talk of a particular dispute between Johnson and Parr, which in her childish conceit (for she had not herself been present) was equal to some conflict between Jupiter and one of the Titans. Possibly it was the stamping dispute, which we may be assured was a fiction. No man—least of all Sam Johnson—falling into any gesticulation or expression of fervour from a natural and uncontrollable impulse, would bear to see

his own involuntary acts parodied and reverberated as it were in a cool spirit of mimicry; that would be an insult; and Johnson would have resented it by flooring his man *instanter*—a matter very easy indeed to him; for in every sense he was qualified to "take the conceit" out of Dr Parr. Or, perhaps, though I rather incline to think that Miss Seward's dispute turned upon some political question, the following, as recorded by Parr himself (*"Parriana,"* p. 321), might be the particular case alluded to:—"Once, sir, Sam and I" (*i. e.*, Sam Johnson) "had a vehement dispute upon that most difficult of all subjects—the origin of evil. It called forth all the powers of *our* minds. No two tigers ever grappled with more fury; but we never lost sight of good manners. There was no Boswell present to detail our conversation. Sir, he would not have understood it. And then, sir, who do you think was the umpire between us? That fiend Horsley."

Miserable fudge! "Grappling like tigers" upon the origin of evil! How, but by total confusion of mind, was that possible upon such a question? One octavo page would state the outline of all that has ever been accomplished on this subject; and the German philosopher Kant, whom Dr Parr professed to have studied, and from whom he borrowed one polysyllable, and apparently one solitary idea, has in a short memoir sketched the outline of all past attempts (especially that of Leibnitz), and the causes of failure. Libraries may be written upon any question; but the whole *nodus* of this particular question lies in a brief series of six sentences; and as yet no real advance has been made in solving it. As to Dr Johnson, it happens that we all know what he could do in this matter, for he has given us the cream of his meditations in a review of Soame Jenyns. Trifling more absolute, on a philosophic

subject, does not exist. Could Dr Parr do better? Had he one new idea on the question? If so, where is it? I remember obscurely some sentence or other of purest commonplace on this point in one of his sermons. Further on I may have an occasion for producing it. At present it is sufficient to say, that as philosophers only could Parr and Johnson ever converse upon equal terms. Both being equally blind by natural constitution of mind, and equally unprepared by study or reading in that department, there was no room for differences between them, except such as were extra-essential or alien to the subject. On every other topic that could have arisen to divide them, Johnson, with one grasp of his muscular hand, would have throttled the whole family of Parrs. Had Parr presumed to talk that sort of incendiary politics in which he delighted, and which the French Revolution ripened into Jacobinism, Johnson would have committed an assault upon him. As that does not appear to have happened, I venture to suppose that their intercourse was but trifling; still, for one who had any at all with Johnson, many of his other acquaintance seem a most incongruous selection. The whole orchestra of rebels, incendiaries, state criminals, all who hated the church and state, all who secretly plotted against them, or openly maligned them, the faction of Jacobinism through its entire gamut—ascending from the first steps of disaffection or anti-national feeling, to the full-blown activity of the traitor and conspirator—enjoyed a plenary indulgence from the curate of Hatton, and were inscribed upon the roll of his correspondents. I pause with a sense of shame in making this bold transition from the upright Sam Johnson, full of prejudice, but the eternal champion of social order and religion, to the fierce Septembrisers who come

at intervals before us as the friends, companions, or correspondents (in some instances as the favourites) of Dr Parr. Learning and good morals are aghast at the association!

It is singular, or at first sight it seems so, that brigaded with so many scowling republicans are to be found, as occasional correspondents of Dr Parr, nearly one-half of our aristocracy—two or three personages of royal blood, eight dukes, five marquisses, six-and-twenty earls, thirteen viscounts, one-and-thirty barons, or courtesy lords; to say nothing of distinguished women—a queen, several duchesses, countesses, and daughters of earls, besides baronesses and honourables in ample proportion. Many of these, however, may be set down as persons systematically (oftentimes insolently) negligent of political principles in correspondents of no political power. The covert meaning in such cases is this: Oh, as to political principles, my friend, yours, it is true, are rotten and detestable; so that, if you occupied any considerable station, that gave weight to your opinions, I should be obliged to *cut* you. But confessedly you are nobody; so that I can conscientiously retain your acquaintance, whilst disregarding your little impotent treasons, as so much babble uttered by a child of three years old. But what are we to think of ten judges (besides Lord Stowell) addressing, with the most friendly warmth, one who looked upon all their tribe as the natural tools of oppression; and no fewer than forty bishops, and four archbishops, courting the notice of a proud priest, who professed it as an axiom that three out of every five on the Episcopal Bench were perfect knaves. Oh! for a little homely consistency; and, in a world where pride so largely tyrannises, oh for a little in the right place! Dr Parr did not in so many words proclaim

destruction to their order as a favourite and governing principle; but he gave his countenance to principles that would, in practice, have effected that object, and his friendship to men that pursued no other.

His Royal Highness the Duke of Sussex opens the correspondence, according to the present arrangement of the letters—if that may be called arrangement where all is anarchy. At first I anticipated, from this precedency granted to a prince, that the peerage and the Red Book would dictate the principle of classification; this failing, I looked to the subject, and next to the chronology. But at length I found that pretty much the same confusion obtains as in a pack of cards, that has first of all been accurately arranged in suits, and then very slightly shuffled. In such a case, strong symptoms occur of the sorting, continually disturbed by weak symptoms of the shuffling: two or three hearts, crossed by two or three spades; and a specious promise of diamonds, suddenly thrown into the shade by a course of clubs. Letters from the same person are usually thrown together, and sometimes a vein of the same subject prevails through a considerable tract of pages. Then suddenly all changes; a new *stratum* crops out; and a printer's devil seems to have determined the order of succession.

The Duke of Sussex, who has actually placed the bust of a hack dissenting book-maker,* rather than that of

* "*Book-maker:*"—I trust that in so describing Dr Rees I do him no wrong. The doctor was understood to be the editor of an immense encyclopædia, originally charged to the public at £80, latterly, I believe, at about 80 shillings. Southey, who was an admirable judge of such compilations, had received a copy as a present from the very liberal proprietors in its early or 80-*pound* stage; and he privately showed me such transformations and specious creations worked by paste and scissors as are elsewhere unexampled.

Aristotle or Lord Bacon, as the presiding genius of his fine library in Kensington Palace, could not, of course, find any objections to Dr Parr in his hostility to the Church of England. His royal highness is probably indifferent on this point; whilst others, as Mr Jeremy Bentham, could hardly fail to honour this defect in "*Church-of-Englandism.*" The duke's letters are amiable and pleasing in their temper, but otherwise (for want of specific subject) not very interesting. Mr Bentham, in more senses than one the Lucifer of the radical politicians, is still less so; and simply because he affects the humorous, in a strain of very elaborate and very infelicitous trifling, upon the names of Parr and Fox (which he supposes to have been anticipated by Homer, in the address to Paris, Δυσπαρι, &c., and in the description of Thersites, Φοξος ην κεφαλην, &c.) In a second letter (February 17, 1823), which abundantly displays the old gentleman's infirmity, who (like Lord Byron) cannot bear a rival in the public interest, no matter whether otherwise for good or for bad, there is one passage which, amusing on its own account, furnishes also an occasion for bringing forward one of Parr's most extravagant follies in literature. It is this:—"The 1st of March," says Mr Bentham, "or the 1st of April, comes out a number of the European Magazine, with another portrait of ME by another hand; *considerable expectations are entertained of this likewise.* When you see a copy of a print of the House of Lords at the time of the Queen's trial, in the hand of Bowyer, and expected to come out in a month or two, you will (if Bowyer does not deceive me) see the phiz of your old friend" [Jeremy, to wit] "among the spectators; and these, how small soever elsewhere, will, in this print, forasmuch as their station is in the foreground, be greater than lords. Oddly enough made up

the group will be. Before me he had got an old acquaintance of mine of former days—Sir Humphrey Davy: he and I might have stood arm-in-arm. *But then came the servile poet and novelist; and then the ultra-servile sack-guzzler.** Next to him, the old radical. What an assortment!" Certainly a strange lot of clean and unclean beasts were in that ark at that time, what with Mr Bentham's "assortment"—what with the *non mi recordo* Italians—the lawyers, *pro* and *con*—and some others that I could name. But with regard to Mr Jeremy's companions in Bowyer's print, does the reader take his meaning? I will be "as good as a chorus" to him, and interpret. The "servile poet and novelist," then, is Sir Walter Scott; the "ultra-servile sack-guzzler," Mr Southey, a pure and high-minded man; the "old radical," Mr Corporal Cobbett. Now, with regard to the last of these, Dr Parr considered him a very creditable acquaintance. He visited the corporal at Botley; and the corporal wrote him a letter, in which he talked of visiting Hatton. (What a glorious blunder, by the way, if the old ruffian had chanced to come whilst Dr Bridges was on duty!) Cobbett would do: but for Sir Walter, in Dr Parr's estimation, he was stark naught. One reason may be guessed at—the Queen; there may have been others, but this was the main reason, and the reason of that particular year. Well, so far we can allow for the Doctor's spite. Queen Caroline was gracious and confiding towards the Doctor, until, by some mysterious offence, he had incurred her heavy displeasure. It was natural that a person in Parr's rank should be grateful for

* "*Sack-guzzler:*"—The reason for this particular reproach must be sought in the antique mode of payment to the laureate (not yet, I believe, obsolete)—viz., so much money and so much wine; the wine being *sherry*, the main element in *sack*.

her notice; and that a person of Parr's politics should befriend her cause. In that same degree, it was natural, perhaps, that he should dislike Sir Walter Scott, and look with jealousy upon his public influence as pledged to the service of her enemies. Both were in this case party men, with the single difference in Sir Walter's favour, that he was of the right party; a fact that Dr Parr could not be expected to appreciate. But was any extremity of party violence to be received as an apology for the Doctor's meanness and extravagant folly in treating so great a man (which uniformly he did) as a miserable pretender in literature? Not satisfied with simply lowering or depreciating his merits, Dr Parr spoke of him as an errant *charlatan* and impostor. Discussing Sir Walter's merits as a poet, there is room undeniably for wide difference of estimates. But he that can affect blindness to the brilliancy of his claims as a novelist, and generally to the extraordinary grace of his prose, must be incapacitated for the meanest functions of a critic, by original dulness of sensibility. Hear the monstrous verdict delivered by this ponderous mechanist of style, when adjudicating the *quantum meruit* of a writer who certainly has few rivals among ancient or modern classics in the rare art of narrating with brilliancy and effect:—"Dr Parr's taste," says a certain Irish poet, a Rev. Mr Stewart, of whom or his works the reader probably now hears for the first time—"Dr Parr's taste was exquisite, his judgment infallible. One morning he sent for me to attend him in his library. I found him seated at one side of the fire, Mrs Parr leaning against the mantel on the opposite side, and a chair placed for me between them. 'Mrs Parr,' he began, 'you have seen Moore in this spot some time ago, *you now see Mr Stewart!*—The race of true poets is now nearly extinct.

There is you' (turning to me), 'and Moore, and Byron, and Crabbe, and Campbell—I hardly know of another.'" [All these, observe, were Whigs!] "'You, Stewart, are a man of genius, of real genius, and of science, too, as well as genius. I tell you so. It is here, it is here,' shaking his head, and sagaciously touching his forehead with his finger. 'I tell you again, it is here. As to Walter Scott, his jingle will not outlive the next century. It is namby-pamby.'" Dr Parr is here made to speak of Sir Walter merely as a poet; but for the same person, in any other character, he had no higher praise in reserve. In the poetry of Sir Walter, I pardon the Doctor for taking little interest. But what must be the condition of feeling in that writer, who, without participating probably in the Doctor's delusions, could yet so complacently report to the world a body of extravagances, which terminated in placing himself, an author unknown to the public, conspicuously above one amongst the most illustrious writers of his age! Dr Parr might perhaps plead, as the apology for *his* share in such absurdities, the privilege of his fireside, kindness for a young friend, and a sudden call upon him for some audacity to give effect and powerful expression to his praise; but Mr Stewart, by recording them in print, makes himself a deliberate party, under no apology or temptation whatsoever, to the whole injustice and puerility of the scene.

Mr Bentham, Dr Parr, and Mr Douglas of Glasgow, are probably the three men in Europe who have found Sir Walter Scott a trifler. Literature, in fact, and the fine arts, hold but a low rank in the estimate of the modern utilitarian republicans. All that is not tangible, measurable, ponderable, falls with them into the account of mere levities, and is classed with the most frivolous decorations of life: to be an exquisite narrator is tantamount

to dressing well; and a finished work of art is a showy piece of upholstery. In this vulgarity of sentiment, Dr Parr could not entirely accompany his coarsest friends; for he drew largely on their indulgence himself as a trespasser in the very worst form—he was guilty of writing superfluous Latin with fluency and striking effect. It is certain, however, that the modern school of reformers had an injurious effect upon Dr Parr's literary character, by drawing out and strengthening its harshest features. His politics became more truculent, and his intellectual sensibilities coarser, as he advanced in years. How closely he connected himself with these people, I shall show in the sketch of his political history. For the present I turn with pleasure to his more elegant, though sometimes not less violent, friends, amongst the old established Whig leaders. These, in their very intemperances, maintained the tone, breeding, and cultivation of gentlemen. They cherished and esteemed all parts of elegant letters: and, however much they have been in the habit of shocking our patriotism or constitutional principles, seldom offered annoyance to our tastes as scholars and men of letters.

Foremost amongst these, as foremost in politics, stood Charles Fox. His letters in this collection are uniformly in the unpretending manner which he courted: what we have too generally to regret, is the absence of Dr Parr's answers, especially to those letters of Mr Fox or his friends, which communicated his *jeux d'esprit* in Greek verse. Meantime, as perhaps the most interesting passage in the whole collection of Dr Parr's correspondence, I will make the following extract from a letter, in which Mr Fox states the final state of his feelings with regard to Edmund Burke: the immediate occasion being a plan, at that moment agitated, for raising a monument to Burke's

memory. The date of this memorable letter is February 24, 1802:—

"Mackintosh wrote to me upon the subject you mention; and I think he took my answer rather more favourably than he was strictly warranted to do. When he said I would second the proposition, I told him *support* was my word.

"The truth is, though I do not feel any malice against Burke, nor would I have in any degree thwarted any plan for his advantage or honour: though I feel the greatest gratitude for his continued kindness to me during so great a part of our lives, and a strong conviction that I owe to his friendship and conversation a very great portion of whatever either of political or oratorical merit my friends suppose me to have displayed; notwithstanding all this, I must own, that there are some parts of his conduct that I cannot forgive so entirely as perhaps I ought, and as I wish to do.

"His public conduct may have arisen from mistaken motives of right, carried to a length to which none but persons of his ardent imagination would have pursued them. But the letter to the Duke of Portland and Lord Fitzwilliam, with the worst possible opinion of me, is what I never can think of without sensations which are as little habitual to me as to most men. To attempt to destroy me in the opinion of those whom I so much value, and in particular that of Fitzwilliam, with whom I had lived in the strictest friendship from our infancy; to attempt it, too, at a time and in a way which made it almost certain that they would not state the accusation to me, and consequently, that I should have no opportunity to defend myself—this was surely not only malice, but baseness in the extreme; and if I were to say that I have quite for-

given it, it would be boasting a magnanimity which I cannot feel.

"In these circumstances, therefore, I think that, even not opposing, much more supporting, any motion made in honour of his memory as an individual amongst the rest, without putting myself forward as a mover or seconder, is all that can be expected or desired of me by those who are not admirers of hypocrisy. I shall have great pleasure, however, in seeing your plan for an epitaph for him, and will tell you freely my opinion of it, both in general and in the detail. He was certainly a great man, and had very many good as well as great qualities; but his motto seems the very reverse of *μηδὲν ἄγαν (nothing in excess)*; and, when his mind had got hold of an object, his whole judgment, as to prudent or imprudent, unbecoming or indecent, nay, right or wrong, was perverted when that object was in question. What Quintilian says of Ovid, 'Si ingenio temperare quam indulgere maluisset,' was eminently applicable to him, even with respect to his passions. 'Si animi sui affectibus temperare quam indulgere maluisset quid vir iste præstare non potuerit?'* would be my short character of him. By the way, I do not know that *affectibus* is the right word; but I know no other."

Monstrous as we must consider this view of Burke's conduct, which, under every provocation from the underlings of Mr Fox's party, continued irreproachably honourable towards those whom he had been compelled *(and whom others† had been compelled)* to abandon,—still, under

* This man, had he chosen to control rather than to humour the impulses of his native mind, what was there beyond his power of attainment!

† Let *that* be deeply remembered: let it not for a moment be overlooked—which gives so violent a wrench to the whole pleading of Charles Fox—that Burke was not the only member of the Whig Club who had left it under a conscientious compulsion.

the perverse prejudices which had possession of Mr Fox, we must allow his temper and his conduct, as here stated by himself, to have been sincere, manly, and liberal. That he did not speak with more fervour of admiration, in summing up the claims of a man so immeasurably beyond his contemporaries in the fineness and compass of his understanding, is not to be imputed to jealousy of his powers, or to the smothered resentments which Mr Fox acknowledges—but entirely to the extreme plainness, simplicity, and almost homely character of his own mind, which laboured under a specific natural inaptitude for appreciating an intellect so complex, subtle, and elaborate, as that of Burke.

We see how readily he clings to the slang notion of Burke's "*imagination*" as the key to all differences between them; and how resolutely he mistakes, for an original tendency to the violence of extremes, what in fact was the mere breadth and determinateness of principle which the extremity of that crisis exacted from a mind of unusual compass. Charles Fox had one grandeur, one originality, in his whole composition, and that was the fervour, the intensity, the contagious vehemence of his manner, which alone, in the absence of all other merit, might avail to plant a man on the supreme eminence as an orator. Let me draw attention to a most remarkable and significant feature in Charles Fox's idiosyncrasy. He could not endure his own speeches when stripped of the advantage they had in a tumultuous and self-kindling delivery. "I have always hated the thought," says he to Dr Parr, "of any of my speeches being published." Why was *that?* Simply because, in the mere *matter*, he could not but feel himself that there was nothing to insure attention, nothing that could give a characteristic or rememberable expres-

sion to the whole. The thoughts were everybody's thoughts. Burke's, on the other hand, were so peculiarly his own, that they might have been sworn to as private property in any court of law.

How was Dr Parr affected by this great schism in politics, the greatest which ever hinged upon pure difference of abstract principle? A schism which was fatal to the unity of the Whig Club, could not but impress new determinations on the political bias, conduct, and language of every Whig partisan. At the time of the Bellenden Preface, it was a matter of course that Parr should praise Burke; he was then the ally of Fox, and the glory of the Whigs. But what tone of sentiment did Dr Parr maintain towards this great man after he had become alienated from the revolutionary cause which he himself continued to patronise, alienated from the party which he continued to serve? For previous to that change his homage was equivocal. It might be to the man, or it might be to his partisan position.

There are many ways of arriving at a decision: in letters, in tracts (Letters on Fox's James II.), and in recorded conversations, Dr Parr's sincere opinions on this question (a question as comprehensive as any personal question ever can have been) were repeatedly obtained. He wrote, besides, an inscription for Burke's public monument; and this, which (in common with all his epitaphs) was anxiously weighed and meditated in every syllable, happens to have been the most felicitous in the opinion of himself and his friends amongst all which he executed. What was its prevailing tone? "I remember," says Parr himself, when writing to Lord Holland, "one or two of Mr Burke's admirers said to me that it was cold; and I answered, that I had indeed been successful; for as I really

did not feel warmth, I had not attempted to express it." Perhaps in these words Dr Parr, with a courtier's consideration of the person whom he was addressing, has done some injustice to himself. Enough remains on record, both in the epitaph and elsewhere, to show that he had not indeed attained to a steady consciousness of Burke's characteristic merits; cold or warm, he was incapable of rising to that high level; but it is manifest that he struggled with a reluctant instinct of submission to the boldest of Burke's views, and fought up against a blind sense of Burke's authority as greater than on many accounts suited him to admit.

Even in this personal accident, as it may seem, taken in connection with the fetters of party, lay a snare to the sobriety of Parr's understanding. The French Revolution, with him as with multitudes beside, unhinged the sanity of his moral judgments. Left to the natural influences of things, he, like many of his political friends, might have recovered a steady equilibrium of mind upon this great event, and "all which it inherited." He might have written to others, as Lady Oxford (once the most violent of democrats, but sickened by sad experience of continental frenzies) had occasion to write to *him*—"Of Burke's writings and principles I am now a very great admirer; he was a great lover of practical liberty. In my days of darkness, prejudice, and folly, I never read a line of Burke; but I am now, thank heaven, in a state of regeneration." Obstinacy, and (except by occasional starts) allegiance to his party, made this noble confession of error impossible to Dr Parr. And the intellectual results to one who lived chiefly in the atmosphere of politics, and drew his whole animation from the fluctuations of public questions, were entirely mischievous. To those who abided

by the necessities of error, which grew upon any systematic opposition to Burke, the French Revolution had destroyed all the landmarks of constitutional distinctions, and impressed a character of indeterminate meaning upon ancient political principles. From that time forward, it will be seen, by those who will take the trouble to examine, that Dr Parr, struggling (as many others did) between the obscure convictions of his conscience, and the demands of his party, or of his personal situation, maintained no uniform opinions at all; gave his faith and his hopes by turns to every vagrant adventurer, foreign or domestic, military scourge, or political reformer, whom the disjointed times raised into a casual notoriety; and was consistent in nothing but in those petty speculations of philology, which, growing out of his professional pursuits, served at last no end so useful as that of relieving the unamiable asperities of his fierce political partisanship.

SECTION III.

How painful it is to all parties—judges or juries, government or the public in general, the culprit or his friends—when a literary man falls under the lash of the law! How irritating to himself and others, that he should be transported—how distressing that he should be hanged! Such fates, however, befell some of Dr Parr's dearest connections; he lived to see his most valued pupil expatriated, in company with felons, to the land of the kangaroo and the ornithorhyncus; and he lived to accompany another friend (who also by one biographer is described as a pupil) to the foot of the gallows.

I mention not these things by way of reproach to Dr Parr's memory. The sufferings of his unhappy friends, *after* they came into trouble, called out none but the good qualities of his nature. Never, indeed, was Samuel Parr seen to greater advantage, than when animating the hopes, supporting the fortitude, or ministering to the comforts, of the poor dejected prisoner in his gloomy cell, at a time when self-reproaches had united with the frowns of the world to make the consolations of friendship somewhat more than usually trying to the giver, and a thousand times more precious to the receiver. If all others forsook the wretched, and fled, Dr Parr did not; his ear was open to the supplications of those who sat in darkness and sorrow; and wherever the distress was real, remembering that he himself also was a poor frailty-laden human creature, he did not think it became him too severely to examine in what degrees guilt or indiscretion had concurred to that effect. Sam Parr! these things will make the earth lie light upon your last abode; flowers will flourish on its verdant roof; and gleams of such remembrances extort an occasional twinge of compunction even from me—at the very moment when I am endeavouring with the gentlest of knoutings quietly to *perstringe* your errors.

Sam Parr! I love you. I said so once before. But *perstringing*, which was a favoured word of your own, was a no less favoured act. You also in your lifetime perstringed many people, some of whom perstringed you, Sam, smartly in return; some kissed the rod, and some disdained it in silence. Complaint, therefore, on your behalf would be unreasonable; that same *parresia*,* which

* "*Parresia*" (Παῤῥησια):—The Greek word for *freedom of speech*.

in your lifetime furnished a ground for so many thousand discharges of the same Grecian pun on your own name (each duly delivered by its elated author as the original explosion), obliges me to deal frankly with your too-frequent errors, even when I am most impressed by the spectacle of your Christian benignity. Indeed, the greater your benignity, the better is my title to tax those errors which so often defeated it. For why, let me ask of Dr Parr's friends, should he choose to testify his friendship to men, in standing by them, and giving his countenance to their affliction, rather than in the wiser course—so suitable to his sacred calling—of interposing his gentler counsels between their frantic designs and the dire extremities which naturally conducted to that affliction? In Gerald's case, he certainly *had* counselled and warned him of the precipice on which he stood, in due season. But to Gerald, as to the chamois-hunter of the Alps, danger was a temptation even for its own sake: he hungered and thirsted after political martyrdom. And it is possible, that in that case Dr Parr found no grounds of self-reproach. *Possible*, I say. Even here I speak doubtingly; because, if Dr Parr applied sedatives to Gerald's fiery nature in 1794, he had certainly in 1790–92 applied stimulants; if, finally, when Mr Pitt and the French Reign of Terror showed that no trifling could be allowed, he pulled vainly at the curb-rein (as his letters remain to show), originally, it is beyond all doubt that he used the spur. Violence and intemperance, it is true, in Mr Gerald were constitutional; yet there can be little doubt that, for the republican direction which they took, his indiscreet tutor was nearly altogether answerable.

Joseph Gerald was a man of great talents: his defence in the Edinburgh court shows it; and I have the assurance

of an able critic, who was himself present at its delivery, in March, 1794, that no piece of forensic eloquence on record better deserved the profound attention with which it was received. Under happier auspices than Dr Parr's, how distinguished a citizen might this man have become! As to Mr Oliver, it is Dr Parr's own statement of the case (a statement which, at this day, I presume, few persons will be found to believe), that he was condemned and executed for drinking Mr Fox's health, and reading Tom Paine's writings; in short, for being a Jacobin. The little trifling circumstance that he was also a murderer, with Dr Parr weighs nothing at all. Take, then, his own representation: who was it that countenanced the reading of Tom Paine, criticising his infamous books *as counterpoises to those of Burke*, and as useful in bringing out a neutral product? Who was it that gave to Warwickshire (Mr Oliver's part of the country), nay, to all England, the one sole example of a "budge doctor,"* arrayed in the scarlet robes of the English universities, and a public instructor of the young English aristocracy, speaking cautiously and respectfully of this shallow dogmatist, who, according to his power, laid the axe to all civil government throughout the world. Who, but one man, clothed in the character of a Christian minister, could have been blinded by party violence to the extent of praising in a qualified manner, and naming, amongst creditable writers, the most insolent theomachist

* "*Budge doctor:*"—Milton's "Comus:" *budge* is a species of fur; furriers can best describe it. But generally the expression has the same value as when we say *the ermined judge*, the use of which phrase is, expressly to remind the professional dignitary, that we are not speaking of him in his private and extra-official capacity, when he might be entitled to play the fool according to his pleasure, but as one clothed with solemn national responsibilities, whose very costume should at every moment have recalled those responsibilities to his remembrance.

and ruffian infidel of ancient or modern times? If Dr Parr's friends acted upon Mr Paine's principles, propagated Mr Paine's principles, and suffered in public estimation, even to the extent of martyrdom, as champions of those principles, nobody can suppose that, in selecting and professing a faith so full of peril, they could be other than greatly influenced by the knowledge that a learned doctor in the Church of England, guide and tutor to themselves, had publicly spoken of that Mr Paine as an authority not altogether without high claims to consideration.

But I have insensibly wandered into political considerations at a point of my review where the proper object before me was — Dr Parr as a man of letters. For this I have some excuse, considering that politics and literature so naturally blended in Dr Parr's practice of authorship, that perhaps not one of his most scholarlike performances, but is richly interveined with political allusions and sarcasms; nor again one of those most professedly political, which did not often turn aside to gather flowers from the fields of the Muses, or herbs of "medicinable power" from the gardens of philosophy. The truth is, the Doctor wrote as he lived; now bending to momentary gusts of passion; then recovering himself through cloudy glimpses to a higher standard of professional duty; remembering by fits that he was officially a teacher, spiritual and intellectual; by fits forgetting himself into a fiery partisan.

However, as I shall consider Dr Parr's politics under a separate and peculiar head, I will, for the present, confine myself more rigorously to his literary character, difficult as it really is to observe a line of strict separation which the good Doctor himself is for ever tempting or provoking us to forget.

As a man of letters, then, what was it—what power,

what accomplishment, what art—that Dr Parr could emblazon upon his shield of pretence, as characteristically his own? Latin: Latin *quoad* knowledge; Latin *quoad* practical skill. "Reading," said he, "reflection, the office of a teacher, and much practice in composition, have given me a command over the Latin sufficient for the ordinary purposes of a scholar." This was his own estimate of himself: it was modest—ostentatiously modest; and possibly he would not have made it, had he been addressing anybody but a Whig lord, taught from his earliest youth to take his valuation of Dr Parr from a party who regarded him as their champion and martyr. Yet again, it is not impossible that he was sincere; for the insincere will make a general profession of humility in the abstract, and yet revolt from the test of individual comparisons: they confess how much they fall short of their own ideal; but as to John, Thomas, or William, they would spurn a claim of superiority offered for *them*. Now, Dr Parr sometimes goes so far in his humility as to "name names:" Sir William Jones, Sir George Baker, *these* I am sure of, and I think Bishop Lowth, were amongst the masters of Latinity, to whom he somewhere concedes the palm for this accomplishment, on a question of comparison with himself. I must profess my own hearty dissent from such a graduation of the honours. Sir George Baker, from his subjects, is less generally known. He was an Etonian, and wrote at least with facility; but medicine has a Latin of her own. As to the other two, who are within everybody's reach, I contend that, maugre their reputation, they do not write good Latin. The kind of Latin they affect is in bad taste: too florid, too *rotund*, too little idiomatic; its structure is vicious, and evidences an English origin. Of Lowth I say this even more determinately than of Sir W.

Jones. Some day or other I shall make a great article on this subject, and I shall then illustrate largely; for, without illustration, such a discussion is as empty and aerial as a feast of the Barmecide.

Meantime, whatsoever the mechanic hounds may say who now give the tone to education, the art of writing Latin finely is a noble accomplishment; and one, I will take upon me to say, which none but a man of distinguished talent will succeed in. All the scholarship in the world will not avail to fight up against the tyranny of modern idioms and modern fashions of thought—the whole composition will continue to be redolent of lamps not fed with Roman oil, but with gas—base gas—unless in the hands of a man vigorous and agile enough to throw off the yoke of vernacular custom—

"Heavy as frost, and deep almost as life."

No custom cramps and masters a man's freedom so effectually as the household diction which he hears from all around him. And that man who succeeds (like Dr Parr) in throwing his thoughts into ancient moulds, does a greater feat than he that turned the Euphrates into a new channel for the service of his army.

This difficulty is in itself a sufficient justification of modern Latin, coupled, as it is, with so useful an activity of thought. But, apart from that, will any man contend that the establishment of a great commonwealth can be complete without artists in Latinity? Even rogues, swindlers, hangmen, are essential to the proper *mounting* of a great metropolis: a murderer or two, perhaps, in the complete subdivision of employments, would not be amiss in casting the parts for a full performance of social life. Assuredly, it cannot be denied that all sorts of villains, knaves, prigs, and so forth, are essential parts in the equi-

page of civil life. Else why do we regard police as so indispensable a function of organised society? for without corresponding objects in the way of scoundrels, sharks, crimps, pimps, ringdroppers, &c., police-officers would be idle superfluities, and liable to general disgust.

But, waiving the question as stretched to this extent, for artists who work in Latin I may plead one more reason than is likely to occur in general—viz., an argument applied to our just national pride. Is it not truly shameful that a great nation should have occasion to go abroad for any odd bit of Latin that it may chance to want in the way of inscription for a triumphal monument, for a tomb, for a memorial pillar, for a public or official gift? Conceding for the moment, but only for the moment, that Latin is of little other application, is it to be endured that we should be reduced to the necessity of importing our Latin secretary? For instance, I will mention one memorable case. The Czar Alexander, as all the world knows, one fine day in the summer of that immortal year 1814, went down to Oxford, in company with our own Regent, the King of Prussia, the Hetman of the Cossacks, and a long roll of other princely personages, with titles fatiguing to the memory, and names appalling to orthography. Some were entertained at one college, some at another. The emperor's billet fell upon Merton College; and, in acknowledgment of the hospitality there shown, some time afterwards he sent to the warden and fellows, through Count Lieven, his ambassador to the Court of London, a magnificent vase of Siberian jasper. This vase wanted an inscription—a Latin inscription of course. This inscription was to be worked in Russia, and the workmen stood resting upon their tools until this should come out from England. Now, under these circumstances, John Bull! con-

ceive the shame and the scandal—if Oxford, the golden seat of classical erudition, under the very eyes of the Czar and his ambassador, had been obliged to resort to some coxcomb on the Continent for the small quantity of Latin required! What would Mrs Grundy have said? What would the Hetman have said? And Woronzoff, and Kutusoff, and Doctoroff, and Tchitchzakoff? Indeed, I cannot think it altogether becoming to Oxford that Cambridge should have furnished the artist; for Dr Parr it was who undertook and executed the inscription, which, after all, exhibited too Spartan a nakedness to have taxed any man very severely, except for the negative quality of forbearance; and the scandal, as between the two universities, is actually on record and in print, of a chancellor of the one (Lord Grenville) corresponding with a doctor of the other, for a purpose which exclusively concerned Oxford. Perhaps the excuse may be, that Oxford was not interested as a body in an affair which belonged strictly to the warden and fellows of an individual college. And at all events, the *national* part of the scandal was averted.

On this subject, which furnishes so many a heartache to a patriotic Englishman, I would beg to throw a hasty glance. John Bull, who piques himself so much and so justly on the useful and the respectable, on British industry, British faith, British hardware, British morals, British muskets (which are by no means the best specimens of our morals, judging by the proportion that annually bursts in the hands of poor savages), and, generally speaking, upon British arts, *provided only they are the useful and the mechanical arts*—this same John Bull has the most sheepish distrust of himself in every accomplishment that professes a purpose of ornament and mere beauty. Here he has a strong superstition in favour of names ending

in *ano* and *ini*. Every foreigner, indeed, but more especially every Italian—it is John's private faith—is by privilege of nature a man of taste, and, by necessity, a knave. Were it only of music that he thought this, and only of Italian foreigners, perhaps he might not be so far amiss. Oh, the barbarous leaning of British taste as regards music! Oh, the trashy songs which pollute our theatres, and are allowed to steal into the very operas of Mozart! Not merely, however, in arts, technically so called, but in every branch of ornamental knowledge, everything that cannot be worked in a loom, weighed on a steelyard, measured by an ell-wand, valued by an auctioneer, John Bull secretly distrusts himself and his own powers. He may talk big when his patriotism is irritated; but his secret and sincere opinion is, that nature has made him a barbarian as regards the beautiful—if not for sensibility, at any rate for executive skill; and that, in compensation of this novercal usage, fortune has given him a long purse, to buy his beauty ready-made. Hence it is, that, whilst openly disavowing it, John is for ever sneaking privately to foreigners, and tempting them with sumptuous bribes, to undertake a kind of works which many scores of times would be better done by domestic talents. Latin, we may be sure, and Greek, fall too much within the description of the ornamental, to be relished by John of home manufacture. Whenever, therefore, a great scholar was heard of on the Continent, him John Bull proceeded to buy or to bargain for. Many were imported at the Reformation. Joseph Scaliger was courted in the succeeding age. A younger friend of his, Isaac Casaubon, a capital scholar, but a dull man, and rather knavish, was caught. Exultingly did John hook him, play with him, and land him. James I. determined that he would have his life written

by him; and, in fact, all sorts of uses were meditated and laid out for their costly importation. But he died without doing anything that he would not have done equally well upon the Continent. The whole profit of the transaction rested with the Protestant cause, which, but for English gold, Casaubon might ultimately have abandoned for the honours and emoluments of Rome. Cromwell, himself, perfect John Bull as he was in many a nobler feature, here also preserved the national faith. He would have his martial glories recorded. Well: why not?—especially being one who had Milton at his right hand. But no; he thought little of *him*—he would buy a foreigner. In fact, he was in treaty for several; and I will venture to say that Salmasius himself was not more confounded upon finding himself suddenly seized, bound, and whirled at Milton's chariot-wheels, in a field where he was wont to career up and down as supreme and unquestioned *arbiter*, than Cromwell was on hearing that his own secretary, a Londoner born, and manufactured at Cambridge, had verily taken the conceit out of the vainglorious but all-learned Frenchman. It was just such another conflict as we see in "As You Like It," between Orlando and the Duke's wrestler, as well for the merits of the parties, as for the pleasant disappointment to the lookers-on. For even on the Continent all men rejoiced at the humiliation of Salmasius. Charles II., again, and his favourite ministers, had heard of Des Cartes as a philosopher and Latinist, but apparently not of Lord Bacon, except as a lawyer. King William, though in the age of Pearson, and Stillingfleet, and Bentley, in the very rare glances which he condescended to bestow on literature, squinted only at Grævius, Gronovius, and other Dutch professors of humanity on a ponderous scale. And, omitting scores of other cases which might be brought in illustra-

tion, even in our own day, the worthy George III., thinking it would be well to gain the *imprimatur* of his own pocket university of Göttingen, before he made up his mind on the value of the books used in the great schools of England, despatched a huge bale of grammars, lexicons, vocabularies, elementary selections, to that most concinnous and rotund of professors, Mr Heyne. At Cæsar's command, the professor slightly inspected them; and having done so, in revenge of private feuds with English critics, he drew up an angry verdict on their collective merits. And thus it happened that his Majesty came to have but an indifferent opinion of English school literature. Now, in this instance we see the John Bull mania pushed to extremity. For surely Dr Parr, on any subject whatever, barring Greek, was as competent a scholar as Master Heyne. And on this particular subject, the jest is apparent, that Parr was, and Heyne was not, a schoolmaster. Parr had cultivated the art of teaching all his life; and it were hard, indeed, if labours so tedious and heavy might not avail a man to the extent of accrediting his opinion on a capital question of his own profession. Speaking seriously, since the days of Busby, that great man who flogged so many of our avi, abavi, atavi, and tritavi, none among the schoolmasters of Europe could, in those days, stand forward as competitors in point of scholarship with Parr. Scholars more eminent, doubtless, there had been, but not among those who wielded the ferule; for Dr Burney of Greenwich, and Dr Butler of Shrewsbury, had not then commenced their reigns. How pointed, then, was the insult, in thus transferring the appeal from a golden critic at home to a silver one abroad; or rather, how strong the prejudice which could prompt such an appeal to one who probably meditated no insult at all.

And let no man say, on *this* occasion, that Parr, being a Jacobin, could not be decently consulted on the scruples of a king; for Heyne was a Jacobin also, until Jacobinism brought danger to his windows. If the oracle at Hatton *philippised*, the oracle of Göttingen philippised no less, and perhaps with much less temptation, and certainly with less conspicuous neglect of his own interest. Well for him that his Jacobinism lurks in ponderous Latin notes, whilst Dr Parr's was proclaimed to the world in English!

It is fitting, then, that we people of England should always keep a man or two capable of speaking with our enemies in the gate, when they speak Latin; more especially when our national honour in this particular is to be supported against a prejudice so deep, and of standing so ancient. These, however, are local arguments for cultivating Latin, and kept alive by the sense of wounded honour. But there are other considerations more permanent and intrinsic to the question, which press equally upon all cultivated nations. The language of ancient Rome has certain indestructible claims upon our regard: it has a peculiar merit *sui generis*, in the first place; and, secondly, circumstances have brought it into a singular and unexampled relation to the affairs and interests of the human race.

Speaking carelessly of Latin, as one of two ancient languages, both included in the cycle of a perfect education, and which jointly compose the entire conservatory of all ancient literature that now survives, we are apt to forget that either of these languages differs from the other by any peculiar or incommunicable privilege: and for all the general advantages which can characterise a language, we rightly ascribe the preference in degree to the Greek. But there are two circumstances, one in the historical po-

sition of the Latin language, and one in its own internal character, which unite to give it an advantage in our esteem, such as no language besides (not even the Grecian) ever did, or, in the nature of things, ever *can* possess. They are these:—The Latin language has a *planetary* importance; it belongs not to this land or that land, but to all lands where the human intellect has obtained its rights and its development. It is the one sole *Lingua Franca;* that is, in a catholic sense, it is such for the whole humanised earth, and the total family of man. We call it a dead language. But how? It is not dead, as Greek is dead, as Hebrew is dead, as Sanscrit is dead—which no man uses in its ancient form in his intercourse with other men. It is still the common dialect which binds together that great *imperium in imperio*—the republic of letters. And to express in a comprehensive way the relation which this superb language bears to man and his interests, I would say that it has the same extensive and indifferent relation to our planet, which the moon has amongst the heavenly bodies. Her light, and the means of intercourse which she propagates by her influence upon the tides, belong to all nations alike. How impressive a fact would it appear to us, if the great Asiatic family of nations from Teheran, or suppose from Constantinople and Cairo (which are virtually Asiatic), to Pekin and the remotest islands on that quarter of Asia, had some one common language through which their philosophers and statesmen could communicate with each other over the whole vast floor of Asia! Yet this sublime masonic tie of brotherhood we ourselves possess, we members of Christendom, in the most absolute sense. Gradually, moreover, it is evident that we shall absorb the whole world into the progress of civilisation. Thus the Latin language is, and will be still more perfectly,

a bond between the remotest places. Time also is connected by this memorable language as much as space; and periods in the history of man, too widely separated from each other (as might else have been imagined) to admit of any common tie, are, and will continue to be, brought into connection by a vinculum so artificial (and, generally speaking, so fluctuating) as a language. This position of the Latin language, with regard to the history of man, would alone suffice to give it an overpowering interest in our regard. But, secondly, as to its intrinsic merits, the peculiarity of its structure, and the singular powers which arise out of that structure, I must leave that topic undiscussed. This only let me say, that, for purposes of elaborate rhetoric, it is altogether unrivalled; the exquisitely artificial mould of its structure giving it that advantage. And, with respect to its supposed penury of words, I beg to mention the opinion of Cicero, who, in three separate passages of his works, maintains that in copiousness it has the advantage of the Greek.

Many questions arise upon the qualities of Parr's Latin in particular, and upon the general rules of style which he prescribed to himself. The far-famed author of the "Pursuits of Literature" has stigmatised the preface to Bellendenus (we beseech you, courteous reader, to pronounce the penultimate short—that is, lay the accent on the syllable *lend*) as "*a cento of Latin quotations;*" in which judgment there is a double iniquity; for, beyond all other human performances, the "Pursuits of Literature" *is* a cento, and, in any fair sense, Parr's preface is *not*. In fact, with all its undeniable ability, all its cloudy amplifications, tortuous energy of language, and organ notes of profounder eloquence leaping at intervals through the "sound and fury" of his political vaticinations—merits which sufficed to propel that

bulky satire through nearly a score of editions—yet, at this day, it cannot be denied that the "Pursuits of Literature" was disfigured by much extravagance of invective, much license of tongue, much mean and impotent spite (see his lying attempt to retort the jest of Colman by raising a Greek dust), but, above all (and in a degree which took all colour of decency from his sneers at Parr), by a systematic pedantry without parallel in literature. To Parr it was open, at least, to have retorted, that in no instance had *he* left it a matter of doubt what language it was that he professed to be writing, whether it were Greek enamelled upon an English ground, or a substratum of Greek tesselated by English. That boast was something: more by a good deal than the learned satirist could pretend to. Such a *mosaic* as his hyper-Manippean satire was never seen by man; unless, indeed, it were in one imitation (the "Millennium") where the author, apparently determined to work in more colours than his master, had strewed his pages with Arabic and Persic, and actually pressed upon the particular and indulgent notice of the Lord Mayor and aldermen in common council assembled various interesting considerations in Coptic.

By such an accuser, then, Parr could not justly be thrown upon his defence. But really at any bar he did not need a defence. Writing professedly as a rhetorician, he caught at the familiar commonplaces of Roman rhetoric, and golden ornaments of Ciceronian mintage, just as in English we point our perorations with the gorgeous tropes of Jeremy Taylor, relieve the austerity of our didactic speculations with the great harmonies of Milton, or lock up our sentences with massy keystones of Shaksperian sentiment. Thus far the famous Preface was no further arrayed in borrowed plumage than really became it as an

avowed *bravura* of rhetorical art, deliberately unfolding its "dazzling fence" in passages of effect, and openly challenging admiration as a solemn agonistic effort of display and execution. What probably misled the unfriendly critic were the continued references in the margin to Cicero, or other masters of Latinity. But these were often no acknowledgments for obligations, but simply sanctions for particular uses of words, or for questionable forms of phraseology. In this Dr Parr was even generous; for, though he *did* sometimes leave traps for the unwary—and this he acknowledged with a chuckling laugh—still, in many more instances, he saved them from the snares which were offered by these suspicious cases in Latinity.

Dismissing, however, in his own contemptuous words this false and malicious exception to Dr Parr's preface, "Quare suo, per me licet, sale nigro ii delectentur, suæque superbiæ morem gerant, qui me dictitant, veluti quendam ludimagistrum, ex alienis orationibus librum meum composuisse," it is very possible that there may be others with better foundation. Amongst these there is one, which I have heard most frequently pressed in conversation, and it is connected with a *quæstio vexatissima* on the general principles of modern Latin diction; was not the style hybrid—that is, a composite style, owned by no one age in particular, but made up by inharmonious contributions from many? I answer firmly—No. Words there are, undoubtedly—single words, and solitary phrases, and still oftener senses and acceptations of words—which can plead no Ciceronian authority. But the mould—the structure—the τυπος of the sentence, *that* is always Roman, always such as Cicero would have understood and countenanced. Nay, many passages there are which Cicero could not have beat for his ears. Every sentence or period

moves upon two principal determinations: its external connection in the first place—how does it arise, upon what movement of the logic or the feeling from the preceding period? and, secondly, its own internal evolution. These *moments* (to speak dynamically) in the construction of sentences according to their treatment (but, above all, in a language the most exquisitely artificial that human necessities have created), become the very finest tests of their idiomatic propriety. In the management of these primary elements in the art of composition, Parr is a master. As to words, or separable parts, which a stroke of the pen can remove and supply, the effect, upon the whole, is little, and to modern ears, untrained by colloquial use to apprehend spontaneously the discordant association of archaisms and neologisms, scarcely any at all. Yet, it is observable, that, to words only, and single phrases, the purists in Latin composition have most unwisely directed their attention.

Above all, the Ciceronian purists were famous in their day; a volume might be written on their history. Fierce sectarianism bred fierce latitudinarianism. Was a writer Ciceronian in his words and phrases? *That*, for some critics, was the one demand. On the other hand, many piqued themselves on throwing off a restriction so severe, and for certain subjects so disadvantageous. Some valued themselves on writing like Tacitus; some, with larger and more natural taste, like Livy. Some even were content with a model as modern as Lipsius or Strada.

In such disputes all turns upon the particular purpose which a writer has in using the Latin idiom. Why, on what considerations, honouring what old prescriptive usage, or looking to what benefit, has an author used Latin at all? For evidently, in foregoing his own mother tongue,

he has wilfully forfeited much ease and some power. His motives, therefore, must be very determinate in a choice so little for his own immediate interest. If, which is the commonest case, he writes Latin merely as a *Lingua Franca*, as the general language of the literary commonwealth of Christendom, and, therefore, purely to create an extended circulation for his thoughts, it is probable that his subject in these days will be derived from some branch of science, or, at all events, some theme treated didactically; for, as an orator, an essayist, or, generally, as a *bellettrist*, he can find no particular temptations in a language which, whilst it multiplies his difficulties, must naturally limit his audience. On a mere calculation of good sense, we may predict that his subject will, in nine cases out of ten, be one which is paramount, by its matter, to all considerations of style and manner. Physics, for example, in some one of its numerous branches, mathematics, or some great standing problem of metaphysics. Now, in such a case, if there be one rule of good taste more pressing than another, it is this—to reject all ornaments of style whatever—in fact all style; for, unless on a question which admits some action of the feelings, in a business of the pure understanding, style, properly defined, is impossible. Consequently, classical Latin, whether of the golden, silver, or brazen age, is, in such a case, equally to be rejected.

Why is it that in law Latin we say *murdravit*, for he *murdered*—*warrantizo*—*homagium*, and so forth? Simply because the transcendent *matter* in all legal discussions, the great interests of life and property which law concerns, the overruling importance of the necessities to which law ministers, making intelligibility and distinction of cases to be the absorbing consideration, cannot but throw into the shade every quality of writing which does not co-operate

to that end; and for those qualities, which have a tendency even to clash with it, cannot but reduce them to the rank of puerile levities. The idea of *felony*, under its severe and exclusive limitation, according to our jurisprudence, could not be adequately reached by any Ciceronian term whatsoever; and this once admitted, it is evident that the filligree frost-work of classical fastidiousness must be allowed to melt at once before the great domineering influences of life in its elementary interests. Religion again, how much has *that* been found to suffer in the hands of classical precisians, to whom the whole vocabulary of Christianity—all the technical terms of its divine economy, all its idioms, such as *grace, sanctification, sacrament, regeneration*, &c.—were so many stones of offence and scandal as regarded the terms, even where they did not reject the conceptions. Now, one law of good sense is paramount for all composition whatsoever—viz., that the subject, the very ideas, for the development of which only any composition at all became necessary, must not suffer prejudice, or diminution, from any scruples affecting the mere accessories of style or manner. Where both cannot co-exist, perish the style—let the subject-matter (to use a scholastic term) prosper!

This law governs every theme of pure science, or which is capable of a didactic treatment. For instance, in natural philosophy, where the mere ideas under discussion, the bodies, the processes, the experiments, the instruments, are all alike almost in a region unknown and unsubjected to any jurisdiction of the classical languages, how vain, how puerile the attempt to fight up against these natural, and for us insurmountable difficulties, by any system of clever equivocations, or ingenious compromises between the absolute barbarisms of the thing, and their nearest classical analogies. By such misdirected sleight-of-hand,

what is effected? We sacrifice one principle, without propitiating the other. Science, defrauded of her exactness, frowns; and the genius of classical elegance does not smile. Precision is wilfully forfeited; and no real ornament is gained. Wheresoever a man writes not for a didactic purpose, but for effect, wheresoever the composition is not a mere means for conveying truths, but its own end and final object as a *power*, there only it may be allowable to attempt a happy evasion of some modern barbarism by means of its nearest Roman equivalent. For example, in a sepulchral inscription, one of the finest modes of the serious epigram, where distinction for the understanding is nothing, and effect for the natural sensibilities is all in all, Dr Parr might be justified in saying that a man died by a *ballista*, as the nearest classical weapon of offence to that which was really concerned in the fatal accident. But the same writer, treating any question of natural philosophy, could never have allowed himself in so vague a term. To know that a man perished under a blow from some engine of war acted on by a mechanical force, without distinguishing whether gun or pistol, bomb, mortar, howitzer, or hand-grenade, might be all that was required to engage the reader's sympathy. Some little circumstantiality, some slight specification of details, is useful in giving direction and liveliness to a general tone of commiseration; whilst too minute an individualisation of objects, not elevated enough to sustain any weight of attention, would both degrade the subject and disturb the natural current of the feelings, by the disproportionate notice it would arrogate under the unwieldy periphrasis that might be necessary to express it. But, on the other hand, in pure physics, the primary necessity of rigorous distinction would demand an exact designa-

tion of the particular implement; size, weight, bore, mode of action, and quantity of resistance, might here all happen to be of foremost importance. Something, in fact, analogous to all this, for the case itself, and for the law which it suggests, may be found in the art of gardening, under its two great divisions of the useful and the ornamental. Taste was first applied to the latter. From the art of gardening, as cultivated for picturesque effects, laws and principles of harmonious grouping, of happy contrast, and of hidden co-operation in parts remote from each other, were soon derived. It was natural that some transfer should be attempted of these rules to the humbler province of kitchen-gardens. Something was tried here, also, of the former devices for producing the picturesque, and the effects were uniformly bad. Upon which two classes of critics arose—one who supposed kitchen-gardens to be placed altogether out of the jurisdiction of taste, and another, who persisted in bringing them within it, but unfortunately by means of the very same rules as those which governed the larger and more irregular province of pleasure-gardens. The truth lay between the two parties; the last were right in supposing that every mode of exhibiting objects to the eye had its own susceptibilities (however limited) of beauty, and its own rules of good taste. The first, on the other hand, were equally right in rejecting the rules of the picturesque, as applicable to arrangements in which utility and convenience presided. Beauty, "wild without rule or art, *enormous* bliss" (that is, bliss which transcends all *norma*, or artificial regulation), which is Milton's emphatic summing up of the luxuries of Eden, obey a much wider law, and in that proportion more difficult to be abstracted than the elegance of trim arrangement. But even this has its own appropriate law

of ornament; and the mistake is, to seek it by translation from some province, differing essentially, and by its central principle, from itself. Where it is possible (as in ornamental gardening on the English plan it is) to appear as an assistant, and in subordination to nature, making her the principal artist, and rather directing her efforts than positively interfering with them, there it is certain that the wild, the irregular, the illimitable, and the luxuriant, have their appropriate force of beauty; and the tendency of art is no more than simply to assist their development, and to sustain their effect, by removing whatever is inharmonious. But in a system of which utility is the object, utility must also be the law and source of the beauty. That same convenience which dictates arrangement and limitation as its own subsidiary instruments, ought to dictate these same principles as the presiding agents for the creation of appropriate ornaments. Instead of seeking a wild picturesque, which delights in concealing, or in revealing only by fits, the subtle and half-evanescent laws under which it grows, good taste suggests imperatively, as the object we should court, a beauty of the architectural kind, courting order and symmetry, avowing, not hiding, its own artifices, and absolutely existing by correspondence of parts.

Latin composition falls into the same or analogous divisions, and these divisions obey the same or corresponding rules. The highest form of Latin composition, ornamented Latin, which belongs to a difficult department of the higher *belles lettres*, clothes itself, by natural right, in the whole pomp and luxury of the native Roman idiom. Didactic Latin of any class, in which the subject makes it impossible to sustain that idiom for two consecutive sentences, abandons it professedly, and creates a new law for

itself. Even the art of annotation, a very extensive branch of purely didactic Latin, and cultivated by immense numbers of very able men, has its own peculiar laws and proprieties, which must be sought in the works of those who have practised it with success.

For an example in support of what I have been saying, and illustrating the ludicrous effect which arises from a fastidiously-classical phraseology employed upon a subject of science, I might refer my readers to the collection of letters between Leibnitz and various correspondents in different parts of Europe, published at Hanover by Feder, among which are some extra superfine letters by a certain Italian abbé.

It is really as good as a comedy, to see the rope-dancing tricks of agility by which this finical Italian *petit-maitre* contrives to talk of electricity, retorts, crucibles, and gas, in terms that might have delighted the most delicate ears of Augustan Rome. Leibnitz pays him some compliments, as he could do no less, upon his superfine apparel; but evidently he is laughing in his sleeve at the hyperbolical pains and perspiration that each paragraph of his letters must have cost him. This Italian simply carried a pretty common mistake to a ridiculous excess. The notion is universal, that, even in writing upon scientific subjects, it is right to strive after classical grace, in that extent to which it shall be found attainable. But this is false taste. Far juster, better, and more self-consistent, is the plain, unpretending Latin of the great heroes of philosophy —Lord Bacon, Des Cartes, and Leibnitz. They court no classical ornaments, no rhetorical phrases; yet the Latin idiom, though not studiously courted, is never harshly violated. Philosophic ideas, philosophic dogmas, of modern birth, are not antedated by giving them Pagan names.

Terms of modern science, objects of modern discovery, are not disguised in a ridiculous masquerade of classical approximations, presenting a conjectural travesty, rather than a just and responsible translation by fair equivalents. The interests of the sense, and the demands of the primary purpose, are everywhere made the governing considerations; and, whilst the barbarisms of some amongst the schoolmen are never imitated, and no idioms positively modern are adopted, the pure Roman idiom is only so far courted as it favours the ends of expedition and precision. In short, I shall not much err in making this general assertion, that a philosophic Latin style, suited to the wants of modern speculation and modern research, has gradually matured itself in the hands of the great philosophic reformers; an ancient language has bent to the pressure of new circumstances, and of modern revolutions in thinking; and it might be shown that it has, in fact, thrown off a new and secondary idiom, neither modern nor antique, and better fitted for despatch, though less showy, than that of ancient Rome; and this secondary idiom has been created in the same way, and by the same legitimate agency, as any language whatsoever—viz., by the instincts of feeling, and the necessities of the human mind. Voluntarily and consciously, man never did, nor could, create a language.

The great men I speak of, as all men engaged in that function, were controlled by circumstances existing out of themselves—viz., the demands of human thinking, as they have gradually been unfolded, and the needs of experimental philosophy. In maturing their product, that neutral diction of philosophy which is neither modern nor ancient, they were themselves controlled by the circumstances I state; yet, again, as they started with a scholar-like knowledge of the ancient Roman idiom, they have re-

ciprocally so far reacted upon these circumstances, and controlled their natural tendency, as not to suffer their own vernacular idioms to impress themselves upon their new diction, or at all to mould its shape and character.

Into these discursive notices I have allowed myself to wander, from the interest which attaches to every phasis of so imperishable a monument of Roman power as survives for all cultivated nations in the Roman language; and also from its near connection with my immediate subject. Recalling myself, however, into that branch of my theme which more particularly concerns Dr Parr, who wrote little (if anything) in the neutral or didactic form of the Latin idiom, but came forward boldly as a performer on the great classical organ of that majestic language—I have said that, in my judgment, he was a skilful performer: I will add that, notwithstanding his self-depreciation, possibly not sincere, he was much more skilful than those who have been most accredited for this accomplishment in modern England; particularly he was superior, as a master of Latinity, to Sir William Jones and Bishop Lowth, the two most celebrated English composers in Latin through the latter half of the eighteenth century.

Whilst thus limiting my comparison of Parr to English competitors for the same sort of fame, I am reminded that Reiske, the well-known editor of the Greek Orators, a hasty and careless, but a copious scholar, and himself possessing a fluent command over the Latin language, has pronounced a general censure (preface to Demosthenes) of English Latinity. In this censure, after making the requisite limitations, I confess that reluctantly I concur. Not that the Continent does not keep us in countenance by its own breed of bald composers; but our English deficiencies are the more remarkable when placed

in collision with the unquestionable fact, that in no country upon earth have the gentry, both professional and non-professional, and the majority even of the higher aristocracy, so large a tincture of classical knowledge. What is still more remarkable, some of our first-rate scholars have been our poorest masters of Latinity. In particular, Taylor, the civilian,* and, forensically speaking, the able editor of Demosthenes, whose style it was, to the best of my remembrance, in connection with some ill-natured sneer at Wolff, that furnished the immediate provocation to Reiske's remark, wrote meanly in Latin; and Porson, a much greater scholar than any of these men, was, as a Latinist, below the meanest of them. In fact, he wrote Latin of any kind—such Latin even as was framed on his own poor ideal—with singular want of freedom and facility: so much may be read in the very movement of his disjointed style. But (more than all *that*) his standard and conception of Latin style were originally bad, and misdirected. A compass so wide as that of Parr, was far beyond Porson's strength of pinion. He has not ventured, in any instance that I am aware of, to trust himself through the length of three sentences to his own impulses; but, in his uniform character of annotator, timidly creeps along shore, attached to the tow-line of his text, and ready to drop his anchor on the least summons to stretch out to sea. In this, however, there is something equivocal: timidity of thinking may perhaps be as much concerned in his extreme reserve, as penury of diction. In reality, the one mortal taint of English Latinity is, that it is a

* "*Civilian:*"—The ridiculous abuse of this word *civilian* in our days obliges me to explain that I mean by *civilian* one of three separate characters:—1. the student; 2. the teacher or professor; 3. the forensic practiser of the civil (or Roman) law.

translation, a rendering back, from an English archetype. In that way, and upon any such a principle, good Latin never can arise. It grows up by another process. To write like an ancient Roman, a man must *think* in Latin. From its English shape, the thoughts, the connections, the transitions, have *already received a determination* this way or that, unfitting them for the yoke of a Latin construction. Even the most absolute fixtures (to use that term) in an English structure, must often be unsettled, and the whole framework of the period be taken to pieces and recast in a thoroughly Latin composition. The interrogative form must often be changed to the absolute affirmative, and *versa vice;* parenthetical intercalations must often be melted down into the body of the sentence; qualifications and restraints added or omitted; and the whole thought, its succession and connection, altered, before it will be fitted to receive a direct Latin character.

This part of my subject, and, in connection with it, Dr Parr's singular command of the Latin idiom, I might easily illustrate by a few references to the Bellenden Preface; and there is the more propriety in a studious use of this preface, because Parr himself declared to one of his friends [Dr Johnstone's Memoirs, p. 263], "there are in the preface almost all the phraseological beauties I know of in Latin."

But this task belongs to a separate paper on modern Latinity. At present I hasten to a class of the Doctor's Latin compositions, in which his merits are more conspicuous—because more characteristically his own.

In the EPITAPHS of Dr Parr, as amongst the epitaphs of this country, where a false model has prevailed—the lapidary style and arrangement, and an unseasonable glitter of rhetoric—there is, in one direction, almost a unique body

of excellence. Indeed, from these inscriptions, I believe it possible to abstract all the *negative* laws which should preside in this species of composition. The defect—a heavy defect—is in the *positive* qualities. Whatsoever an epitaph ought *not* to be, that too frequently it is; and by examining Dr Parr's in detail, we shall find, from the uniformity of his abstinence in those circumstances which most usually offer the matter of offence, that his abstinence was not accidental; and that *implicitly*—that is, by involution and silent implication—all the canons of a just theory on this branch of art are there brought together and accumulated. This is no light merit; indeed, when one reflects upon it, and considers how many and how able men have failed, I begin to think that Sam was perhaps a greater man by the intention of nature than my villanous prejudices have allowed me to suppose. But with this concession to the *negative* merits of the Doctor, let it not be thought illiberal in me to connect a repetition of my complaint as to the defects of the τὸ *affirmative* in this collection. Every art is there illustrated which can minister to the gratification of the judgment: the grand defect is in all that should affect the sensibility. It is not enough in an epitaph, that it does not shock or revolt my taste or sense of propriety—of decorum—and the *convenances* arising out of place, purpose, occasion, or personal circumstances. The absence of all this leaves me in the condition for being suitably affected: I am ready to be affected; and I now look for the τὸ *positive* which is to affect me. Everything has been removed by the skilful hand of the composer, which could interfere with, or disturb, the sanctity or tenderness of my emotions: "And now then," the ground being cleared, "why don't you proceed to use your powers of pathos? The Grecian *epigrammata*—that matchless

bead-roll of tender expressions for all household feelings that could blossom amongst those for whom no steady dawn of celestial hopes had risen—that treasury of fine sentiment, where the natural pieties of the human heart have ascended as high as a religion so meagre could avail to carry them—do not rely for their effect merely upon the chastities of their composition. Those graces act simply in the way of resistance to all adverse forces; but their *absolute* powers lie in the frank language of natural grief, trusting to its own least elaborate expression, or in the delicacies of covert and circumstantial allusion. Of this latter kind, we have occasionally an example in Dr Parr himself:—when he numbers, not the years only, and months, but the *hours*, even, of a young man's life, he throws the attention indirectly on the affecting brevity of his career, and on the avaricious love in the survivors clinging tenaciously to the record of his too fugitive hours, even in their minutest fractions. Applied to elder persons, this becomes too much of a mechanical artifice. But, the pointed expression by any means, or artifice whatever, of the passions suited to the occasion, is far too rare in the Parrian inscriptions. One might suppose even that pious grief and tender *desiderium*, the final cause, and the efficient cause, at once of epitaphs, were, in Dr Parr's estimate, no more than a *lucro ponamus*, something indifferent to their essence, and thrown in casually as a *bonus* beyond what we are entitled to expect.

Meantime, allowing for this one capital defect, all the laws of good composition, and of Latin composition, in particular, are generally observed by Dr Parr. In particular, he objected, and I think judiciously, to the employment of direct *quotations* in an epitaph. He did not give his reasons; perhaps he only felt them. On a proper occasion,

I fancy that I could develop these reasons. At present it is sufficient to say, that quotations always express a mind not fully possessed by its subject, and abate the tone of earnestness which ought to preside either in very passionate or in very severe composition. A great poet of our own days, in writing an ode, felt that a phrase which he had borrowed ought not to be marked as a quotation; for that this reference to a book had the effect of breaking the current of the passion.* In the choice of his Latinity, also, Dr Parr prescribed to himself, for this department of composition, very peculiar and very refined maxims. The guide whom he chiefly followed was one not easily obtained for love or money—*Morcellus de Stylo Inscriptionum.* Yet sometimes he seems to have forgotten his own principles. An epitaph was sent for his approbation, written by no less a person than Louis XVIII. All the world is aware that this prince was a man of cultivated taste, and a good classical scholar; and, in particular, minutely acquainted with Horace. The prince was, however, for such a task, something too much of a Catholic bigot; and he disfigured his epitaph by introducing the most unclassical Latinity of the Vulgate. Nevertheless, Dr Parr thought proper to approve of this. Now I admit, and the spirit of my remarks already made on the Latinity for scientific subjects will have shown that I admit, cases in which classical Latin must systematically bend to modern modifications. I admit, also, that the Vulgate translation, from the sanctity of its authority in the Romish Church, comes within the privileged class of cases which I have created,

* This poet was Wordsworth; the particular case arose in the "Ode on the Intimations of Immortality;" and I will mention frankly, that it was upon my own suggestion that this secondary and revised view was adopted by the poet.

or a secondary order of Latinity, deserving to be held classical in its own proper jurisdiction. Sepulchral inscriptions for Christian countries being usually in churches, or their consecrated purlieus, may be thought by some to fall peculiarly within that line. But I say—No. It would be so, were the custom of monumental inscription wholly, or in its first origin, a religious one; whereas epitaphs are primarily a matter of usage and sentiment, not at all prescribed by religion, but simply checked and modified by the consecrated place in which they are usually sculptured, and by the religious considerations associated with the contemplation of death. This is my opinion, and ought to be Dr Parr's; for, in writing to Sir Joshua Reynolds on the subject of an epitaph for Dr Johnson, amongst other judicious reflections upon the general subject of Latin inscriptions, he says, "If Latin is to be the language, the whole spirit and the whole phraseology ought to be *such as a Latin writer would use.*" Now, the Vulgate translation of the Scriptures would have been nearly unintelligible in the ages of classic Rome, and nowhere more so than in that particular passage which fell under Dr Parr's examination.

The laws of the Epitaph, a peculiar and most interesting branch of monumental inscription, and the modification of these laws as applied to *Christian* cemeteries, present a most attractive subject to the philosopher, and the man of taste in conjunction. I shall relegate the inquirer to an essay on this subject by Wordsworth, the sole even tentative approximation which I know towards a philosophic valuation of epitaphs upon fixed principles. His essay is beautifully written, and finely conceived. The central principle of an epitaph he states thus (I do not pretend to quote, speaking from a recollection of many years back):—It expresses, or ought

to express, the most absolute synthesis of the generic with the individual—that is to say, starting from what a man has *in common* with all his species, the most general affections of frail humanity—its sufferings and its pleasures, its trials and triumphs, its fears and awful hopes; starting from this as the indispensable ground of all *general* sympathy, it goes forward to what a man has most peculiar and exclusive to himself—his talents, and their special application—his fortunes, and all the other incommunicable circumstances of his life, as the ground for challenging a separate and peculiar attention. The first element of an epitaph claims the benefit of participation in a catholic interest; the second claims it in that peculiar degree which justifies a separate and peculiar record. This most general idea of an epitaph, or sepulchral inscription, which is valid for all religions, falls in especially with the characteristic humility of the Christian. However distinguished amongst his earthly peers, yet in the presence of that Being whose infinity confounds all earthly distinctions, every man is bound to remember, in the first place, those great bonds of a common mortality—a common frailty—and a common hope, which connect him with the populous "nations of the grave." His greatest humiliation, but also his most absolute glory, lies in that mysterious incarnation of an infinite spirit in a fleshly robe, which makes him heir to the calamities of the one, but also coheir to the imperishable dowery of the other. As the basis, therefore, of any interest which can connect him with the passing reader, and as an introductory propitiation also to the Christian *genius loci*, he begins by avowing his humanity —his absolute identity with what is highest and lowest, wisest and simplest, proudest and meanest, in all around him.

This principle must preside in every epitaph alike. There is another equally important which should govern the conclusion; and, like that which I have just been urging, as, on the one hand, it is prompted by universal good taste, and therefore claimed its rights even under a Pagan mythology, so, on the other, it lends itself, with a peculiar emphasis, to the characteristic tone of a Christian epitaph. It is this:—we may observe that poets of the highest class, whether otherwise delighting or not in the storm and tumultuous agitation of passion, whether otherwise tragic or epic in the constitution of their minds, yet, by a natural instinct, have all agreed in tending to peace and absolute repose, as the state in which only a sane constitution of feelings can finally acquiesce. And hence, even in those cases where the very circumstances forbade the absolute tranquillity of happiness and triumphant enjoyment, they have combined to substitute a secondary one of resignation. This may be one reason why Homer has closed his chief poem with the funeral rites of Hector; a section of the "Iliad" which otherwise has appeared to many an excrescence. Perhaps he was unwilling to leave us with the painful spectacle of the noble and patriotic martyr dragged with ruffian violence round the funeral pyre of Patroclus, the coming desolation of Troy in prospect, the frenzy of grief in its first tempestuous career amongst the Trojan women and children, and the agitations of sympathy in the reader as yet untranquillised. A final book, therefore, removes all these stormy objects, leaving the stage in possession of calmer objects, and of emotions more elevating, tranquillising, and soothing:—

"Ὡς οἵγ' ἀμφίεπον ταφὸν Ἕκτορος ἱπποδάμοιο."

"So tended they the grave [ministered to the obsequies] of Hector, the tamer of horses."

Or, to give it with the effect of Pope's rhythmus—

> "Such honours Ilion to her hero paid;
> And peaceful slept the mighty Hector's shade."

In one sense, indeed, and for that peculiar auditory whom Homer might contemplate—an auditory sure to merge the universal sense of humanity in the local sense of Grecian nationality—the very calamities of Troy and her great champion were so many triumphs for Greece; and, in that view, it might be contended that the true point of repose is the final and absolute victory of Achilles; upon which supposition, the last book really is an excrescence, or at least a sweeping ceremonial train to the voluminous draperies of the "Iliad," in compliance with the religious usages of ancient Greece. But it is probable that my own view of the case is more correct; for there is other and independent evidence that Homer himself was catholic enough in his sensibilities to sympathise powerfully with Hector and Priam, and means his hearers to do so. Placing himself, therefore, at least for the occasion, in the neutral position of a modern reader, whose sympathies are equally engaged for Greece and for Troy, he felt the death of Hector as an afflicting event; and the attending circumstances more as agitating than as triumphant; and added the last book as necessary to regain the key of a disturbed equanimity. In "Paradise Lost," again, this principle is still more distinctly recognised, and is practically applied to the case by an artifice even more elaborate. There the misery—the anguish, at one point of the action—the despair, are absolute; nor does it appear at first sight how, or by what possibility, the reader can repossess himself of the peace and fortitude which even the sullen midnight of tragedy requires, much more the large sunlight of the Epopee. Paradise was lost; that idea ruled and domineered in the

very title; how was it to be withdrawn, or even palliated, in the conclusion? Simply thus:—If Paradise were lost, Paradise was also regained; and though that reconquest could not, as an event, enter into the poem, without breaking its unity in a flagrant manner, yet, proleptically, and in the way of vision, it might. Such a vision is placed by the arch-angelic comforter before Adam; purged with euphrasy and rue, his eye beholds it; and for that part which cannot artistically be given as a visionary spectacle, the angel interposes as a solemn narrator and interpreter. The consolations which in this way reach Adam, reach the reader no less; and the reader is able to unite with our general father in his thankful acknowledgment:—

> "Greatly instructed shall I hence depart;
> Greatly *in peace of mind.*"

Accordingly, spite of the triumphs of Satan—spite of Sin and all-conquering Death, who had left the gates of hell for their long abode on earth—spite of the pollution, wretchedness, and remorse, that had now gained possession of man—spite of the far-stretching taint of that contagion, which (in the impressive instances of the eagle and the lion) too evidently showed itself by "mute signs," as having already seasoned for corruption earth and its inheritance—yet, by means of this one sublime artifice, which brings together the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and end of time, the last day of man's innocence, and the first of his restoration, it is contrived that a twofold peace—the peace of resignation and the peace of hope—should harmonise the key in which the departing strains of this celestial poem roll off; and its last cadences leave behind an echo, which, with the solemnity of the grave, has also the halcyon peace of the grave, and its austere repose. A third instance we have—even more direct and unequivocal,

of the same principle, from this same poet, not only involved silently in his practice, but also consciously contemplated. In the "Samson Agonistes," though a tragedy of most tumultuous catastrophe, it is so contrived, by the interposition of the chorus, who, fixing their hopes in the heavens, are unshaken by sublunary griefs, not only that all should terminate

"In peace of spirit and sublime repose,"

but also that this conclusion should be expressly drawn out in words as the great moral of the drama; by which, as by other features, it recalls, in its most exquisite form, the Grecian model which it follows, together with that fine transfiguration of moral purpose that belongs to a higher, purer, and far holier religion.

Peace, then, severe tranquillity, the brooding calm, or γαλήνη of the Greeks, is the final key into which all the storms of passion modulate themselves in the hands of great poets.

"In war itself—war is no ultimate end."

All tumult is for the sake of rest—tempest, but the harbinger of calm—and suffering, good only as the condition of permanent repose. Peace, in a double sense, may be supposed inscribed on the portals of all cemeteries: that peace, in the first place, which belongs to the grave as the final haven after the storms of life—and in this sense the sentiment belongs equally to the Pagan, the Mahometan, and the Christian; secondly, the peace of resignation to the will of God, in the meek surrender at his call of those on whom our profoundest affections had settled. This sentiment belongs pre-eminently, if not exclusively, to Christianity; is known, I presume, in some sense, to the Mahometan; but not at all to the Pagan. And this it is in which Christian epitaphs should terminate. Hence it is peculiarly offen-

sive to a just taste, were no higher principle offended, that despair—or obstinate refusal of consolation—should colour the expression of an epitaph. The example which (if I remember rightly) Wordsworth alleges of this capital fault, is from the famous monument erected by Sir Brooke Boothby, a Derbyshire baronet, to his only daughter, a very beautiful and intellectual child, about eight years old. The closing words of the inscription are to this effect:—"The wretched parents embarked their all upon this frail bark, *and the wreck was total.*" Here there are three gross faults: first, it is an expression of rebellious grief, courting despair, and within the very walls of a Christian church abjuring hope; secondly, as a movement of *violent* passion, it is transient; despair cannot long sustain itself; hence it is pointedly out of harmony with the *durability* of a marble record. How puerile to sculpture laboriously with the chisel, and thus invest with a monumental eternity, any sentiment whatever which must already have begun to fade before the sculptor has finished his task! thirdly, this vicious sentiment is expressed figuratively—that is, fancifully. Now, all action of the fancy is out of place in a sepulchral record. No sentiment is *there* appropriate except the weightiest, sternest, and most elementary; no expression of it, except the simplest and severest.

"Calm passions *there* abide, majestic pains."

These great laws of feeling, in this difficult and delicate department of composition, though perhaps never contemplated distinctly *as* laws by Dr Parr, yet seem to have been impulsively obeyed by many of his epitaphs. And, with regard to the *expressions* of his thoughts, except to the extent of a single word—as, for instance, *velificari*, in which the metaphorical application has almost obliterated the original meaning—I remember nothing figurative, no-

thing too gay, nothing luxuriant;—all is chaste, grave—suited to the solemnity of the situation. Had Dr Parr, therefore, written under the additional restraints *connected with the additional powers* of verse, and had he oftener achieved a distinguished success in the pathetic, he would, as an artist in monumental inscriptions, have held a place amongst the highest class. Meantime, his merits are the less memorable, or likely to leave an impression on our literature, that they are almost invariably negative; painfully evading faults which are not known or suspected *as* faults by most readers, and resisting temptations to rhetorical displays that, even if freely indulged, would for the multitude have had a peculiar fascination.

SECTION IV.

About the year 1789, Dr Parr was involved in two literary broils—the one purely aggressive on *his* part, the other nearly so; though, as usual, the Doctor coloured them to his own mind as measures of just retaliation. The first arose in his wanton republication of a pamphlet, written by Bishop Warburton, but afterwards suppressed by his orders; and to this pamphlet he united another, "by a Warburtonian," meaning Bishop Hurd; prefixing to the whole a preface, and a most rhetorical dedication, from his own pen, in which he labours to characterise both the bishops, but especially the living one, in terms that, whilst wearing some show of justice, should also be as sarcastic and as injurious as possible. The mere act of reviving what the authors themselves had been painfully anxious to suppress, is already sufficiently offensive, and expressive of

a spiteful mind, had the preface even been spared. What was the provocation to a piece of mischief so puerile? Listen to the Doctor, and you will suppose that no motive but the purest and most philanthropic had governed him: Leland and Jortin, two dissenting clergymen, respectably learned as regarded the amount of their learning, and usefully learned as regarded its application;—these men had, by the Bishop of Gloucester (Warburton), and by his sycophant, the Bishop of Worcester (Hurd), as Parr alleged, been cruelly undervalued: Leland had been "most petulantly insulted, and Jortin most inhumanly vilified." Well—and what then? Better men than ever stood upon *their* pins have been insulted, hustled, floored, smashed, and robbed. Besides, hard words break no bones. And why could not the two dissenters have settled their own quarrels with the two bishops? In effect, they *had* done so. Why must Dr Parr intrude his person into the row, long after it was extinct, and when three out of four parties nominally interested were in their graves? Oh, but, says Dr Parr, the example was the thing; neither of the offenders had been punished; and their impunity, if tolerated, would encourage future bishops to future assaults upon future dissenters, when future Parrs for redressing the wrong might not be at hand. He was resolved to deter others from supposing "that what has been repeatedly and deliberately done in secret, will not, sooner or later, be punished openly." Finally, coming nearer to the true purpose of the whole, he avows that "it was intended to *lessen the number of those who speak too well of Bishop Hurd.*"

Vain and tortuous disguises of malice self-betrayed! Now, let us hear the true lurking motives to this almost unprincipled attack, which Dr Parr so studiously masked

under pretexts of public purposes. One writer tells us that Parr, on a visit to Hartlebury (the Bishop of Worcester's villa), had been dismissed with little ceremony, and with hospitable attentions either none at all, or so chilling as to pique his pride. This anecdote, however, I have reason to think, refers to a period subsequent to the original offence. Perhaps that offence might arise in a case where the bishop drew upon himself the ferocious resentment of Parr, by hesitation in passing one of Parr's friends, then a candidate for holy orders. Even this resentment, however, was possibly no more than the first expression of Parr's secret mortification at the bishop's private opinion of his sermon on education. Nothing in this world travels faster than the ill-natured judgments of literary men upon each other; and Parr probably heard from a thousand quarters that Hurd had expressed his dislike to the style, or the preposterous length of this "vernacular sermon." That this anecdote is true, nobody doubts who remembers the pointed manner in which Parr himself notices, in his dedication, Bishop Hurd's "rooted antipathy to *long vernacular sermons from Dr Parr.*"

Of such quality are often the true motives even of good men, when their personal feelings are roused. The whole pretence of Parr was a fiction. Jortin and Leland were already avenged. Both had retaliated upon Hurd, and, as Parr fancied, with success. The one, he said, had "chastised" Hurd with "wit"—the other had "baffled" him with "argument." So many cudgellings for one crime were out of all proportion. "These two excellent men," says Parr, were not to be annoyed again and again by the poisonous arrows of slander." Neither was this excellent bishop to be "again and again" pulled up to the public bar, and annoyed for having annoyed *them*. "Tit

for tat" all the world over; and if a man, "being fap," as Pistol observes, and also too lively with young blood, will "try conclusions," and perhaps "assault and batter" a leash of worthy men, he must pay. But *having* paid (as, suppose, five pounds), then, at Bow Street or anywhere else, he is held entitled to his five pounds' worth of battery. He has bought it, settled the bill, and got a stamped receipt. For *them* to claim further payment, entitles *him* to further battery.

But one argument shall put down Dr Parr's pretences. Were Jortin and Leland the only parties to whom Hurd or Warburton had furnished actionable matter? Not by a hundred. They had run a-muck at all the men who lay in their path. To go no further than one of Parr's friends: Bishop Lowth and Hume had been assaulted with more injustice than either of those for whom Parr stood forward. Hurd had called Hume "a puny dialectician." Now this was insolence. Hume, even as a *litterator*, was every way superior to the bishop; but, as a dialectician, Hume to Hurd was a Titan to a pigmy. The "Essay on Necessary Connection," which was the seed that has since germinated into the mighty forest of German philosophy, was hardly in one sentence within Hurd's comprehension. As to Lowth, we would not quarrel with those who should fasten a quarrel upon *him*.

But if that is our way of thinking, it was not Parr's. He was incensed at Hurd for his depreciation of Lowth; he was incensed with him, and justly, for his affected contempt of Hume; he was incensed with another worthy bishop for insidiously calling Lardner "industrious," as though, in raising such a pile as the "Credibility of Gospel History" (originally counting seventeen octavo volumes), he had no other merit than that of supporting his "wife

and family." Why then, my Sam, did you not visit for these offences? This question, so far as it regards Hume, Sam answers himself. "Leland and Jortin," says he, "had a right to expect from their clerical opponent a milder and more respectful treatment than that given to a sceptic who scoffed at all the principles of religion." By no means, doctor; I beg your pardon. Leland and Jortin had a right to fair play, and to so much every man, *Tros Tyriusve*, has the same right. But, once for all, let us hear an answer to this. If Leland and Jortin had a privileged case by comparison with Hume, and a claim upon Hurd's forbearance, much more had Lowth a privileged case as regarded Parr, and a claim, if any man could have, upon his vindictive friendship; for Lowth had been Parr's earliest patron. How comes it, then, that he left Lowth to the protection of Providence? Lowth, it will be said, redressed his own wrongs. True, he did so; but so did all of them—Hume, Jortin, Leland, &c. Supposing, therefore, Dr Parr sought a case for his Quixotism, in which he might avenge a man that was past avenging himself, why did he not "perstringe" his patron, Lowth, for taking liberties with Richard Bentley? This case was a very bad one; the "petulance" of Hurd could not be worse than the petulance of Lowth; and what a difference in the objects of their attack! Finally, let us remember this: Milner, the papist of Winchester, had the audacity publicly to denounce Porteous, Bishop of London, as a bigot and falsifier of facts; Bishop Hoadly and Bishop Shipley, as Socinians; Hallifax, Bishop of Durham, as a papist (thus literally applying to Dr Hallifax the very identical aspersion which he had himself wiped off from Bishop Butler, in his edition of that prelate's works); Dr Rennell as a knave; and the Bishops Barrington, Watson,

Benson, and Sparke, as insincere believers in the Protestant faith. This ruffian, for such he really was, Dr Parr addressed in a long letter meant for the press. But he never printed his letter; and, now that it *is* printed, what do we find? An expostulation running over with courtesy, forbearance, and unreasonable concessions; no sneering, no threats. So mild was Dr Parr in defending outraged truth—so furious in avenging his wounded self-love!

Such was the famous attack on Hurd, in its moving impulse. As to its literary merit, doubtless that is considerable. Perhaps the author of the "Pursuits of Literature" went too far in styling it "astonishing and splendid." Assuredly it is in bad taste—not so much for its excess of antithesis, simply considered; *that* is rightly defended by Mr Field, as a legitimate engine of rhetorical effects; but for the effort and visible straining which are often too palpably set forth, in finding matter suitable for loading the opposite scales of the antithetic balance. However, it is a *jeu d'esprit* of great ability, and may give to an English reader some notion of the Bellenden Preface.

The other feud of this period forms a singular chapter in the secret history of books. Dr White, the Oxford Professor of Arabic, had preached, for one year, the Bampton Lectures. They were much admired. But all at once a discovery was made, that a part of these lectures had been written by a Mr Badcock, a dissenting clergyman, recently dead, who latterly had ceased to be a dissenter, having conformed to the Church of England. This discovery, so painful and discreditable to the Arabic professor, was made through a bond for £500 given by Dr White to Mr Badcock, which B.'s sister endeavoured to recover, and

which the professor was weak enough to resist. The ground which he took was plausible—that the bond had been given, not for work done, but for work *to be* done. At the very time when this affair broke out, Dr Parr happened to arrive at Oxford. White was his intimate friend. But it is difficult to imagine a sort of conduct less reconcilable with the obligations of friendship, than that which Parr adopted. Without delay, without consulting Professor White, he avowed his peremptory disbelief in Badcock's claim; but on what ground? On the ground that he was himself the contributor of a very considerable share to these lectures. Never did man do a more critical injury to a friend; and were it not that the irritations of jealous vanity, with constitutional incontinency of secrets, seem to have overpowered and surprised his better resolutions, I should be compelled to pronounce it perfidy. Whatsoever help of this nature one literary man gives to another, carries with it an implied obligation to secresy; otherwise, what else results than that, under the mask of giving a partial assistance to a friend's literary fame, the writer has, in fact, been furnishing himself with the means of crushing it entirely. He has given perhaps a trifle that he might take away the whole; for, after such an exposure, the man has credit for nothing at all as *certainly* his own. And this injury was, as I have said, critically timed; coming at the moment of Mr Badcock's claim, about which much doubt prevailed, and was likely to prevail, from the death of the only person who could effectually meet the denial of White, Dr Parr's claim at one and the same time authenticated itself and Badcock's; that is, it doubly shattered White.

Meantime, Parr's claim was a true one. Mr Kett (so well known in Oxford by the name of Horse Kett, from

his *equine* physiognomy) thus states at once the extent of Parr's contributions, and their value: "Whether I consider the solidity of the argument, the comprehension of thought, or the splendour of style, I think them, upon the whole, the most able and elegant parts of the lectures. In point of quantity they are considerable, as they are more than a *fifth* of the whole, without reckoning the corrected passages. But their intrinsic excellence is such, that any person, with such materials, might not only have obtained a great deal of present applause, but lasting fame. They are in the highest style of composition, as they are of a philosophical and refined cast, and make many of the other parts of the lecture with which they are connected appear nothing more than loose and florid declamation."

Laborious investigations, conferences, and explanations followed; in which, it appears to me, that Dr Parr behaved with little generosity, and White with much duplicity. One incident is remarkable: Dr Parsons, of Baliol College, one of the arbitrators or referees, at length withdrew himself from the service he had undertaken, but in so pointed and significant a manner as to satisfy myself that he also had very considerable right of property in these lectures, which his honour or his kindness had obliged him to dissemble; and that, in some one of Parr's reclamations, in making which (though perfectly sincere), he relied confessedly on a very vague recollection, or a still vaguer discrimination of styles, Parr had unintentionally been trespassing on ground which Parsons secretly knew to be his own. This is my own private opinion. To the parties interested never was any literary broil so full of vexation. Cabals were gathering at Oxford in the interest of White on the one hand, or of Dr Gabriel of Bath on the other; the public journals took up the affair, with their

usual imperfect information; private characters suffered; old friendships were dissolved for ever; and, finally, no party reaped either profit or honour from this contest for the proportions of property in a book, which has long since been consigned to oblivion (however unjustly) by the whole world—whether hostile or friendly.

But, after all, the worst scandal of this transaction settled not upon any individual so much as upon the professional body of divines in general. That part of the correspondence which got abroad, admitted the public ruinously behind the curtain, and exhibited the writers concerting their parts, and arranging their passages of display, their clap-traps, and *coups-de-théatre*, in a manner but little creditable to their singleness of heart, or simplicity of purpose. They had the air at one time of attorneys, scheming to obtain a verdict for Christianity; at another, of martinets, arranging the draperies of their costume, or of *figurantes*, attitudinising for effect. We must be particularly brilliant, says White, in that part where we attack Gibbon. Alas! for the ancient faith—the primitive devotion—that burned in the evangelists and martyrs, in Hilarion or Paul, in Wycliffe or Luther! How little room did *that* allow for any thoughts about self, or calculations of literary credit! Dr Parr, however, was no party to this huckstering traffic in devotional feeling, or this manufacture of spiritual thunder. Hypocrisy was not *his* failing; whatever was the value of his religious opinions, his devotional feelings were thoroughly sincere. But he suffered from the connection in which his name appeared; and, as regarded the duties of a friend, his character has suffered in this transaction permanently, from his own indiscretions, and from the infirmity of his too ungenerous vanity.

To sum up Dr Parr's pretensions as a man of letters, I

have already sufficiently acknowledged that his talents were splendid, and fitted, under suitable guidance, to have produced a more brilliant impression on his own age than they really did, and a more lasting one on the next age than they ever will. In his lifetime, it is true that the applauses of his many pupils, and his great political friends, to a certain extent, made up for all deficiencies on his own part; but now, when these vicarious props are withdrawn, the disproportion is enormous, and hereafter will appear to be more so, between the talents that he possessed and the effects that he accomplished. This result is imputable, in part, to his own want of exertion, and the indolence with which he shrank from undertaking any labour of great compass or research, the very best of his performances being mere *velitations*, skirmishes, or academic exercises; and in part, also, it is imputable to a cause less open to moral reproach—namely, the comparative poverty of his philosophic understanding, between which and his talents there was no equilibrium. He gave a bright and gaudy colouring to truths which were too often trite, mean, or self-evident. And the impression was ineradicable in a keen observer's mind, of a perpetual swell, glitter, and false inflation, beyond the occasion, and without a corresponding activity or power of thought. His architecture was barbaresque—rich in decoration, at times, colossal in proportions, but unsymmetrical, and reposing on no corresponding foundations. It is very possible, and not uncommon, to have a poor understanding combined with fine talents. I do not say that Dr Parr's understanding was a poor one; but it was in no sense emphatically a fine one, not habitually profound, not philosophically subtle. Unquestionably it was mismatched, in point of natural vigour, with his talents—that is, with his powers of giving effect

to his thoughts, and realising his conceptions. The splendours of Burke, yoked, as they were, with the very finest, subtlest, and most combining intellect that ever yet has been applied to political philosophy, awoke no sense of disparity or false balance in his powers. But, in the case of Parr, we feel that, having once tasted the luxury of his periodic sentences, with their ample volume of sound and self-revolving rhythmus—having enjoyed his artful antithesis, and solemn antilibration of cadences—we have had the cream of his peculiar excellences, and may exclaim with Romeo, that it is time to be gone, because "the sport is at the best."

As to that other cause which co-operated to the effect I have been stating—viz., Parr's indolence, or unpersevering industry—his excuse was the less that his stomach (where it is that most men fail) was as strong as the shield of Telamonian Ajax, and his spirits, even under attacks of illness, were indomitable; he himself styles them "*lion* spirits." Heavens! what an advantage in that temperament above the general condition of literary men! Coleridge, for example, struggling with the ravages of opium through forty years, and with the *res angusta domi*, in a degree never known to Parr, has contrived to print a score of octavo volumes. And were all his contributions to the "Morning Post" and "Courier" collected, and his letters, many and long, together with his innumerable notes on the fly-leaves and margins of books, he would appear to have been a most voluminous author, instead of meriting the reproach (which too often I have been fated to hear) of shameful indolence and waste of stupendous powers. Of Dr Parr's very criminal indolence there was but one palliation: much of his life had passed in the labours of the school-room; and his leisure from those was

excusably turned to purposes of relaxation. Still he had latterly a long period of immunity from toils of every kind; he had a library of above ten thousand volumes; he had increasing wealth; and, for years, he toiled not, neither did he spin. As to his execrable handwriting, that is rather an explanation than a justification of his sterility. Pretty often he had the aid of volunteer amanuenses; and was he at any time too poor to have paid a secretary? Beginning with some advantages for literary research so much beyond those of Gibbon, in his far greater familiarity with the languages of ancient books, why should Dr Parr, the apologist of universities against Gibbon, not have left behind him a monument of learned industry as elaborate as that of his opponent? On the whole, I fear that Dr Parr, as an author, must always be classed with those who have spent their vigour upon *certamina ludicra*, mock fights, mimic rehearsals, and shadowy combats; that his knowledge and the sweat of his brow have been laid out upon palaces of ice, incapable of surviving the immediate atmosphere under which they arose, and dissolving with the first revolution of the seasons, rather than upon the massy Roman masonry that might have sustained his influence to a distant posterity. This may seem his misfortune, but then it was a misfortune to have been foreseen. And, for the more intrinsic qualities of his works, it will be recorded in their very fate that, if their execution was sometimes such as to challenge a permanent interest, their matter was unable to support so great a distinction; and that, perhaps, of all known works, they are best fitted to illustrate the critical objection of *materiem superabat opus* (the workmanship transcended the material); and finally, with regard to their author, that hardly any writer, of age so mature, of education so regular, and of pursuits so solemn

and professional, had derived his subjects from occasions so ephemeral, or his excitement from motives so personal.

It remains that I should speak of Dr Parr as a politician and as a divine: and fortunately the transcendent character of the facts will bring those inquests within the range of a short trial and a self-evident verdict.

First, as a politician. The French Revolution found Dr Parr a Jacobin; *found*, I say, not made. Of this there is abundant presumption. To give his vote for Wilkes, he faced a situation of considerable risk; he was unwigged, and probably saved his life by escaping through a back window to his horse. Considering that he was then the *Reverend* Samuel Parr, this argued no trivial sympathy with the seditious agitator. It is true that a constitutional question was at issue in the case of Wilkes's expulsion; but it does not appear that Parr gave his countenance to Wilkes the purist of the constitution, so much as Wilkes the demagogue; and loved him upon the principle laid down by Junius—viz., "so long as he was a thorn in the king's side." Besides, right or wrong in politics, ought an impure scoffer like Wilkes, by common repute * the author of an obscene "Essay on Woman," to have commanded the volunteer and ardent support of a clergyman? Was this decent? Such, however, were Parr's earliest attachments, and such the leonine ardour with which he displayed them. In a better cause I should have admired his courage; for he seems to have been resolved to go to Brentford,† in the spirit of Luther, though there had

* At the time of writing this I had no reason (which now, on revision, I have) for doubting Wilkes's participation in the authorship.

† "*Brentford:*"—This gloomy place, on the left bank of the Thames, about seven miles to the west of Hyde Park Corner, is the county town of Middlesex; consequently, *there* it was the voting for Wilkes went on.

been "as many devils there as tiles upon the roofs of the houses."

Well, in the fulness of time came the French Revolution. The first persons to sing public pæans of congratulation in this country were the dissenters of Birmingham—moving under the domineering influence of Dr Priestley. What followed is known to all whose recollections stretch back to those tumultuous days. Dr Priestley's house was stormed and sacked by the Birmingham mob; his philosophical apparatus (as a private one, matchless) destroyed; his papers, letters, philosophical MSS. scattered to the four winds; and the angry philosopher himself, by a fierce levanter of indignation, driven westwards to America. These scenes passed in too close neighbourhood to Dr Parr, for a temper so combustible as his to escape kindling at the flame of party fury. We may be sure also that he took the side of Priestley: to the extent of pity for his misfortunes, all good men did so; but, as an approver of the conduct which provoked these misfortunes, I may almost venture to say that, amongst the fifteen thousand clergymen of the Church of England, Dr Parr stood altogether alone. Every person of sober mind, whilst commiserating Dr Priestley as an unfortunate man, and esteeming him as a very ingenious one, could view him in no other light than as the victim of his own folly and misguided passions. Political frenzy had prompted him to acts of defiance against a mob as fanatical in one direction as himself in another; with this difference, however, that *their* fanaticism pointed to a very much more seasonable policy than the fanaticism of the celebrated experimentalist. The mob had retorted as an insulted and irritated mob may be expected to retort. They who play at bowls must look for rubbers. And Dr Parr, by

mixing in the game, wantonly drew upon himself a participation in the danger; or at least a participation in the terror; for, after all, he seems to have been more frightened than hurt. Great was his panic; schooled by Dr Priestley's losses, he sent off his books hastily to Oxford. They suffered from the hurried removal; and at Oxford, where they were indifferently sheltered, they suffered still more. This lesson might have done him good service, had his temper allowed him to profit by it. But neither fear nor interest was ever able to check *his* fanaticism. With such a temper we may suppose that he was blinded to all sense of his own errors by the dazzling light with which his anger invested the errors of the opposite party. At an after period the Doctor's cries ascended to heaven in print against the mob and their criminal politics. Yet such is the temper of this world, that, if a grave philosopher, by shaking his fist, and other acts of bravado, should happen to provoke a company of mischievous boys to reply with a shower of stones, people in general suffer their resentment to settle upon the philosopher for his wanton provocation, rather than on the boys for that lapidary style of retort in which their wrath has been trained to express itself.

This affair, taken singly, being mixed up with considerations of persons and neighbourhood, might, after all, but indifferently represent the condition of Dr Parr's politics. Other ebullitions of his feelings about the same period were less equivocal. On Mr Burke, for the crime of writing his memorable book on the French Revolution, he inflicted the whimsical punishment of inverting his portrait —that is, suspending it with the head downwards. The insolent tyranny of this act is remarkable. Mr Burke had held up his "protesting hand" against the Revolution; and

he, if ever any man, upon any question, had explained the philosophic grounds of his protest. It seemed, therefore, that, with or without reasons, no dissent was tolerated from Dr Parr's views. For, as to Mr Burke's vehemence, it was no more than the natural warmth of sincerity. Precisely the same sentence of degradation, I believe, was executed upon Mr Windham, and for the same offence. This was intelligible; and was equity, if not justice. Equal acts merited equal treatment. But in a third case the same degradation, by greatly extending the construction of guilt, warranted much larger inferences against Dr Parr's motives. The third criminal was Paley; on *his* portrait, also, sentence of inversion was passed and executed; and for years it hung at Hatton in that position. What, then, had been Paley's crime? *Audi facinus majoris abollæ;* he had literally been guilty of writing "*Reasons for Contentment.*" The title explains its object. At a crisis of universal political irritation, when Paine's works and the French Revolution had combined to diffuse a spirit of change, and when the indefeasible evils of poverty were made handles of disaffection, being charged upon the institutions of the land, Dr Paley had exerted himself to dissipate such delusions; to rouse the ignorant to a sense of the real blessings which they enjoyed under equal laws administered by a popular government; and thus to save them as well from secret discontents as from publicly lending themselves to the purposes of designing incendiaries. This was the service which he did, or attempted; and for this only, neither more nor less, he incurred the wrath of Parr; I may add, that he was never forgiven. The following record of his feelings in regard to Paley he left behind him for publication:—"I never thought Paley an honest man: he had great sagacity, wit, and science; some good humour; but

he was *vain, inconsistent*" [odd objections to come from Samuel Parr]: "he was also, it appears, . . . [*i.e.*, something too bad for Parr's executors to print], and selfish."

No one fact can better illustrate the furious disaffection of Dr Parr. Simply because a man applied his great talents to a purpose of the highest charity, which could no otherwise serve the existing ministers even remotely and mediately, than by first of all serving* many thousands of his humble countrymen directly and essentially, he became with Dr Parr a marked man. After this it will not be surprising that even the Whiggish correspondents of Parr found occasion to remind him that England was not the country in sober sadness which it suited their party tactics to represent; that he was interpreting too literally the violences of their public polemics; and that England did in fact continue to be, what she had so long been esteemed by all the world, except her eternal enemies, the ark to which were confided the dearest interests of man.

In 1794 war had begun to rage; the revolutionary frenzy had produced its bloodiest excesses; the gloom had terrifically deepened; and the French reign of terror, by a very natural reaction on all the rest of Europe, produced a corresponding system of vigilance and coercion in all regular governments, which must now be admitted to have been too harsh and despotic, if viewed apart from the extremities of the occasion. Questions which depend for their adjudication upon the particular estimate which is taken of the impending dangers, allow room for great

* "*Serving his countrymen:*"—I do not mean to assert that Paley *did* in any effectual sense accomplish this service; neither is the spectacle a pleasant one, of rich people, such as Paley and Hannah More, sitting in luxurious saloons, and lecturing their poor, hard-working fellow-countrymen upon the enormity of the blessings which they enjoy. But Paley's *purpose* was to all appearance honest and patriotic.

latitude of opinion amongst honest men. From mere differences of bodily temperament, men of the sanest judgments take radically different views of the very broadest cases that can arise; and starting as he did from Whiggish principles, Dr Parr is entitled to a large indulgence in his construction and valuation of Mr Pitt's policy. We ought to allow, therefore, most readily for the fervour of interest which he took, not merely as a private friend to some of the parties concerned, but also as a constitutional politician, in the state trials which occurred at that period. For poor Gerald, as a splendid pupil of his own, as an unfortunate man betrayed into calamity by generous enthusiasm, and as a martyr to most disinterested indiscretions, Parr was entitled to feel the very warmest concern. I and others, of principles very adverse to Dr Parr's, are of opinion that Gerald was most harshly, nay, unconstitutionally treated. He was tried (through accidental connection with an Edinburgh club) in Scotland, and under a superannuated law of Scotland, which had arisen out of another condition of things, and was never meant for our times; it was a mere accident that such a law should be unrepealed; and a verdict was obtained against him that the rest of the empire could not have countenanced. This was a case beyond any other to merit a pardon, even in the opinion of those who thought Mr Gerald a turbulent democrat, since undoubtedly the verdict was in some measure obtained surreptitiously. Conduct that, on one side the Border, was then punishable with transportation, on the other was confessedly, at the very utmost, a misdemeanour. Under these circumstances, to have enforced the sentence, and to have thrown a man of genius and a scholar into the society of ruffians, and the very refuse of jails, was doubtless an unjustifiable harshness. Warmth,

therefore, and earnestness might be expected from Dr Parr, in behalf of his unhappy friend. But nothing short of childish defect in self-government could have allowed Dr Parr to insult the very person to whom he looked for a mitigation of the sentence. Yet this he did. Writing to Mr Windham, as Home Secretary, for the exertion of his influence with Mr Pitt, he told him with a bullying air that Mr Gerald was as able a man as Mr Pitt, and a great deal more learned. What followed? Mr Windham had been acquainted with the doctor, and was the very man to have felt for the peculiar hardship of Mr Gerald's case. But of an application in this spirit he could not allow himself to take any official notice. A formal answer was returned; and Mr Gerald's sentence was permitted to take its course. Was Windham right? I think *not*. The merits of Gerald's position should not have suffered from the intemperance of his advocate. Did Windham's error tend to neutralise that of Parr? Not at all. Parr's political enthusiasm had then risen to the height of fanaticism, which set at nought all ordinary discretion.

However, the truth must be told: the first anti-Gallican war, though supported (as I shall always maintain) by the *élite* of British society, by the property and education of the land, did not unite all hearts in its cause. There was still room left for honest recusants; though it is undoubtedly true, that most of those who did actually stand forward conspicuously in that character, were so upon any but laudable motives. Unless where they happened to be betrayed by natural defects of discretion, and original incapacity for calculating consequences—a case which I believe to be that of Dr Parr—nearly all the sturdy recusants to Mr Pitt's policy moved upon the very worst impulses of anti-national feeling. Pitiably blind they were in some

rare instances; but in more, desperately unpatriotic. Still, I repeat that room was left for honest dissent up to a certain point; and there are not a few, even now, amongst those whose patriotism was never tainted, and who gave to Mr Pitt the fullest benefit of their accession as regarded principles, that yet question the policy of a military league against the infant republic of France—as being that which in effect, by furnishing to France the occasion for resistance, finally developed her yet unconscious strength.

But a few short years sufficed to place all this upon new foundations. If ever, in this world, a nation had one heart and one soul, it was the British nation in the spring of 1803. A poet (William Wordsworth), who had deeply protested against the first French war, at this crisis, exclaimed, addressing the men of Kent, who had reason to look for the first attack—

"We *all* are with you now from shore to shore!"

No need of sagacity at this time: blind instinct was sufficient to develop the views of the Consular government, and to appreciate the one sole policy which circumstances commanded. And here it was the Whigs (I mean the Whigs in Parliament) lost themselves, and riveted that national distrust which had first commenced with the schism in the Whig Club. They would not change their tone; they would not open their eyes to the new state of things; but continued to palliate the worst atrocities of the enemy, and to prophesy a long heritage of shame and defeat for ourselves. At that period it was many times remarked, that the long habit of expressing sympathy with the national foes, insensibly moulded the feelings of the Opposition to a tone of bitterness against a nation that spurned their abject counsels, and of too evident mortification at the spectacle of our military triumphs. To pro-

phesy evil for his own nation is an unwise course for any man; it gives his vanity, and perhaps his personal enmities, an interest in the national disasters, and at all events disturbs the currents of his patriotic sympathies. Strange as it may sound, there have been Englishmen to whom it was thought necessary by their families cautiously to break the shock of the great news of Waterloo, so violent was the grief anticipated at the final prostration of their idol. We could mention one man, well known in his day as a miscellaneous author, and not an unamiable man (though a coxcomb) in his character of literary patron, who, being accidentally at a dinner-party on the day when that mighty catastrophe reached Norfolk, was kept in ignorance of the news by an arrangement concerted separately with each of the guests (amongst whom was Wordsworth) as he happened to arrive; it was understood that this precaution was requisite to insure his attendance at dinner.

No such case ever has occurred in France. The martial successes of France in the days of Louis XIV., when the unhappy Palatinate was twice given up to desolation by French marshals, obtained the cordial sympathy of the whole people, no less than the still more atrocious acts of Napoleon. No excess of profligacy and injustice connected with martial trophies has ever damped the unity of patriotic joy amongst the French: no sanctity of defensive warfare has ever availed to insure it amongst the English. And, generally, this may express no more than that freedom of thought amongst ourselves, which presents all public topics under every variety of phasis. But as there are cases in morals upon which good feeling precludes all variety of judgment, so in politics there are rare crises upon which the good and evil of posterity so essentially depend, that any diversity of feeling is irreconcilable with

the very lowest stage of patriotism. Absolute conformity is required by simple honesty; and no toleration exists for dissenters of any class.

Such a case existed from 1803 to 1815, and more eminently than ever before in the history of mankind. What was Dr Parr's behaviour? I shall not go into it at length: to see a good man wandering so grievously from the path of his clear duty, is afflicting; and a few instances will tell in what channel his feelings ran. In the spring of 1814, when all Christendom was exulting in the approaching destruction of the destroyer, Dr Parr writes thus to Mr Coke:—"My indignation at the English Government, as the real and implacable disturbers of the peace of Europe, increases daily and hourly; and from that malignant spirit which began to act in 1793, and is now reinforced by the accession of such an auxiliary as the Prince Regent [ah, that sad *Pince Thegent!*], I forbode the most disastrous consequences. My fear is, that the allies will be overruled by the earnestness, or cajoled by the bribes, of the Prince Regent and his minions." So then, upon this view of things, Jena, Austerlitz, Borodino, the outrages upon Spain, Portugal, Germany, Russia, were not French—they were British acts. But patience!

In what way it was that Dr Parr received the Waterloo news, we learn from no express record; but, indirectly, we can easily collect it. About two months before that battle, he anticipated such an event as what was most to be abominated. The horizon already reddened with the dawn of that coming retribution; already it was believed that to England, in reward of her matchless perseverance, would be assigned the exterminating sword;* and Dr

* "*The exterminating sword.*"—See Wordsworth's "Sonnet on Waterloo."

Parr—sharing that belief, but abjuring the moral hopes of that belief—sickens at the prospect. Worse than this we cannot say of any man. I may add, however, that his condition of feeling on these subjects continued pretty uniform. He wrote violently against assassination, and the exception often urged in favour of tyrannicide. But how exclusively the benefit of even this doctrine was applied to our enemy, may be judged by this:—Mr Percival was murdered in the summer of 1812, by a stranger (Bellingham), not known to him even by sight; Dr Parr's attention is attracted, by no one consideration but the excuses which might be offered for the assassin. The Duc de Berri is murdered without even the shadow of a provocation, by one whom he also did not know; Dr Parr assures his correspondent that he [not the murderer, as one would naturally wish to understand the passage, but the murdered prince] was a "vulgar ruffian." Again, as another illustration of his fanatic violence, Mr Hone publishes parodies on the Scriptures: as a politician after his own heart, though in a conscious opposition to the decorums of his sacred profession, and to his own sincere reverence for religion, Dr Parr encourages and sanctions him by a money subscription. And we find the Duke of Bedford, who forfeited the distinction of representing his sovereign in his own county, solely by a participation in the same expression of approbation, directly justifying his conduct (upon which, in some views, he felt a doubt) by Dr Parr's example. Not, certainly, that the duke would have laid any stress upon Dr Parr's authority in a question merely political, but where the politics of the case had been complicated with a point of religious casuistry—viz., how far it was right to take a *judicial* notice of scoffs pointed at the religious creed of the land, his grace had

naturally supposed that path to be safe which had been trodden by a professional divine. I might accumulate many more cases; but enough is here cited to show that, as a politician, Dr Parr stood aloof from his country in the hour of her most memorable trials, and dishonoured his grey hairs by absolute fanaticism, that lost sight finally even of his religious principles.

This leads me to the view of Dr Parr as a divine, in which it had been my intention to show, that in every part of his life he allowed the principles of his theology to be biassed by his political prejudices. Dissenters of all classes were welcome to him, whether their dissent began originally upon religious or political views, because in any case it terminated in hostility to the state. Upon examining Dr Parr's sermons, I find too little of a regular chain or system of religious principles to sustain the review which I meditated: and of the correspondence yet published, too small a part turns upon theological questions to do much in supplying this defect. I shall content myself for the present, therefore, with observing that, whilst he dwelt with ludicrous self-congratulation upon the support he gave to orthodoxy in the purest trifles, he really betrayed the interests of his church in its two capital interests,—as against the Roman Catholics on the one hand, and the Socinians on the other. Long and laboured were his pleadings for the Roman Catholics, and for the relaxation of the penal laws against them, in his notes upon Mr Fox's "History;" and on the other hand he attacked the Archbishop of Dublin, otherwise a friend and admirer, in a rancorous tone, for denying the title of Christianity (in which denial he is countenanced by many a score of learned and pious men) to Socinianism. Finally, he left for posthumous publication, a printed record of his dissatisfaction

with Anti-Socinian and Anti-Arian arguments: and he has left repeated evidence, apart from his known leaning to Socinian views, that he had not in any stage of his life adopted any system at all which could properly class him with the believers in the Trinity.

Dr Parr in one point showed himself superior to a popular error; even Archbishop Laud, but more memorably another Primate (Wake) of the following century, had fallen into the weakness of supposing that the English church and the Gallican could terminate their differences as if by a compact of mutual concession. But no treaty of compromise could restore the real "Catholic unity;" no remedy could in that way be applied to the evils of schism in the Christian church. Towns and territory may be the subject of cession, but not truth. And of this Dr Parr was fully sensible. Yet in other aspects of the same weak passion for a hollow name of peace, Dr Parr was often as blind as others. Pity that he had not more uniformly remembered the spirit of a maxim which he sometimes quoted from Grotius—that he so loved Peace, as not to sacrifice Truth. He persuaded himself often that the differences of men in religious matters were in a large proportion verbal; a common, a very common, but a very shallow maxim. On the contrary, from my earliest days I have remarked, that for one verbal dispute which passes for a real one, there are ten disputes undoubtedly *real* which are popularly dismissed as verbal. "*Tu fis*," says Boileau,

> "Tu fis dans une guerre si triste et si longue,
> Périr tant de Chrétiens—*martyrs d'une diphthongue.*"

Martyrs of a diphthong? Yes. But Boileau, as much as anybody, maintained that this single diphthong was the occasion that the church "sentit—trembler *la vérité Chre-*

tienne:" the whole peculiar truth of Christianity reposed upon that one diphthong—for it made the whole difference between the Catholic ὁμοούσιος and the Arian ὁμοιούσιος: so mighty are the differences which may be involved, not in a word only, but even in a syllable; and so truly did Boileau, therefore, but destructively to his own argument, characterise even *that* as "une sillabe *impie.*" (Sat. xii.)

I have questioned the systematic perfection—the orbicularity (so to speak) of Dr Parr's classical knowledge. Much more certainly might I question the coherency, as a whole, of his divinity. What he adopted in this department was taken up casually and independently: his theology was not the fruit of laborious investigation at the fountain-heads. It was gleaned here and there, separately, by fragments, from chance authors, and not finally fused or harmonised.

Finally, and as the sum of my appreciation, I should say that, speaking of him as a moral being, Dr Parr was naturally good and conscientious, but (in a degree which sometimes made him *not* conscientious) the mere football of passion. As an amiable man, I must add that, by the testimony of his best friend, he was a domestic nuisance; he also, as well as his father, says Dr Johnstone, was "the tyrant of the fireside." As a scholar, he was brilliant; but he consumed his power in gladiatorial displays, and has left no adequate monument of his powers. As a politician, he sank his patriotism in the spirit of a partisan; and forgot to be an Englishman, in his fanaticism for the ultra Whigs. And, last of all, as a divine, for the sake of those sectaries whom charity enjoined him to tolerate, he betrayed that church which it was his holiest duty to defend.

NOTE.

The errors of the press, and the errors of the *redacteur* himself, are very serious in Dr Johnstone's large and costly work. Let me take the liberty of counselling him, if from a Tory he will accept counsel, to change the whole form of his labours—in German phrase to reproduce them in an *umbearbeitung*, or thorough recast on the following plan, as soon as ever the sale of the present arrangement shall have been sufficient to warrant him in doing so. Complying with this or some similar proposal, he will at once consult Dr Parr's interests as a man of letters, and will do that service to scholars which they have almost a right to demand of him. First of all, let the sermons be dismissed; they load the edition, and hang heavily upon its circulation, with no apparent benefit of any kind; none of them have ever been popular, or in the eye of the public, except the Spital Sermons; and those, being miscellaneous philosophic essays, have a special privilege of reprieve. The sermons are liable to the continual suspicion of being *in part* only of Dr Parr's composition, from his known practice (which he even avowed) of interweaving auxiliary passages from divines who happened to meet his own views, or, in some instances, of deriving his whole groundwork from others, and simply running variations of his own, many or few, upon his adopted theme. It is possible (but the public are not aware in what degree) that the sermons selected for publication may be free from this particular objection; but, at all events, as a body, the readers of sermons are too devout a class to find their own peculiar taste gratified in a collection breathing the Parrian spirit of religion; for instance, one sermon undertakes the defence of hunting, and might very properly have come from one of the brilliant brothers of the Melton Mowbray establishment. This having been preached in the morning, I see no reason why the evening service should not have brought us an apology for steeple-chases—which seem even to have the advantage in this point—that such matches *never lose sight of the church.* At least, in their origin, steeple-chases obeyed that law—*Ride at the steeple, no matter what obstacles interpose.* Certain it is, that the sermons, whether otherwise of merit or not, are in this respect faulty, that they do not contemplate any determinate audience; professedly, indeed, they are parish discourses; and yet they deal with topics foreign to the needs and sympathies of a plain rural

congregation, sometimes even inaccessible to their understandings. Doubtless all farmers would understand the hunting sermon; but how many would enter in any sense into the question of Christ's descent into Hades? However, I need not discuss the value of the sermons; good or bad, here they are; printed for the benefit of all readers, if any such there are, who happen to want them; and they are certainly *not* wanted by the vast majority of scholars—of whom, on the other hand, few but would put some value on the *philological* speculations of Dr Parr—and, according to their feeling and taste, all connoisseurs in Latin composition would be glad to possess so brilliant an ἀγωνίσμα in rhetoric as the "Bellenden Preface." Thus, therefore, let the new edition stand; reprint all Dr Parr's critical tracts, essays, or fragments, of course, not omitting (as Dr Johnstone has done, with no intelligible explanation, vol. i. p. 543), the long investigation of the word *sublime* (already much abridged by Dugald Stewart), nor the various reviews of classical works contributed to literary journals by Dr P., wheresoever these reviews happen to be of any value.* Even the letters, when they discuss critical questions, should be detached from the main body of miscellaneous correspondence, and united by way of appendix to the rest of the critical matter. Points of criticism, it is true, in the letters, are rarely insulated from occasional and personal matter, which would become irrelevant in its new situation; but this objection might be met by confining the extracts strictly to those passages which *are* critical, and printing them as so many separate notices or memoranda, under the title of *Adversaria*. These might be accumulated in one volume, which, by means of a separate title-page, could be sold as a distinct work; and, by means of a half-title, could also take its place as one section of Dr Parr's general works. These would perhaps compose two more volumes, each offering the same recommendation, and, by means of special half-titles, the same opportunities to separate purchasers—one being made up of the very *élite* of his essays on political or moral subjects, the other of his rhetorical *bravuras*.

* I say this, because the review of Combe's "Horace," which Dr Johnstone *has* re-published, is chiefly occupied with trifling typographical minutiæ. The *obscura diligentia* of such corrections will be unprofitable to *any* class of readers (I should imagine), unless it were the class of publishers or editors meditating new and more elaborate editions of "Horace."

NOTES

TO WHIGGISM IN ITS RELATIONS TO LITERATURE.

Page 43.

Lord Wellesley* has been charged with a foible of the same kind—how truly, I know not. More than one person of credit assured me, some fifty and odd years ago, that, at his levees, when Governor-General of India, he was gratified, as by a delicate stroke of homage, upon occasionally seeing people throw their eyes to the ground—dazzled, as it were, by the effulgent lustre of his own. This is possible; at the same time I cannot but acknowledge that my faith in the story was in some slight degree shaken by finding the same foppery attributed to Augustus Cæsar, in the Memoirs of Suetonius. Meantime it is a singular coincidence that Lord Wellesley resembled Augustus Cæsar in stature, in eyes, and in delicacy of features.

Page 48.

Those who carry a spirit of distinguishing refinement into their subdivisions and classifications of colloquial talent, according to its powers and qualities, may remark one peculiar feature in Edmund Burke's style of talking, which contra-distinguished it from Dr Johnson's: it grew; one sentence was the rebound of another; one thought rose upon the suggestion, or more properly upon the impulse, of something which went before. Burke's motion, therefore, was all a going forward. Johnson's, on the other hand, was purely regressive and analytic. That thought which he began with, contained, by involution, the whole of what he afterwards put forth. The two styles of conversation corresponded to the two theories of

* At the time of writing this, *Lord Wellesley* meant the Marquis Wellesley, second Earl of Mornington, and elder brother to the Duke of Wellington.

generation—one (Johnson's) to the theory of *Preformation* (or Evolution), where all the future products, down to the very last, lie secretly wrapped up in the original germ; consequently nothing is positively added, everything is simply unveiled—the other (Burke's) to the theory of *Epigenesis*, where each stage of the growth becomes a causative impulse to a new stage—every separate element in the mysterious process of generation being, on this hypothesis, an absolute supervention of new matter, and not a mere uncovering of old, already involved at starting in the primary germ. A great gain would be obtained for intellectual philosophy, if a sufficient body of themes, Burkian and Johnsonian, were assembled, and illustrated by an ample commentary, under the distinction here indicated.

Page 54.

Dr Parr's casuistry for regulating his practice in the case of his being called upon to read occasional forms of prayer, proclamations, &c., which he might not approve as a politician (and observe, he never *did* approve them), was this: read he must; that was the text of his apology; thus far he was bound to blind submission. *Passive* obedience was an unconditional duty, but not *active*. Now it *would* be an active obedience to read with proper emphasis and decorum. Therefore everybody sees the logical necessity of reading it into a farce, making grimaces, "inflicting one's eye," and in all ways keeping up the jest with the congregation. Was not this the boy for Ignatius Loyola?

Page 56.

Had Mr Fox lived a little longer, the current belief is, that he would have raised Dr Parr to the mitre; and had the Doctor himself survived a little longer, Lord Grey would perhaps have tried his earliest functions in that line upon him.

Page 58.

I may have an opportunity further on of showing what was Parr's conduct to the church of which he professed himself a member, and in what sense he could be said to have betrayed it. At present I shall protect myself from misconstruction, by saying that his want of fidelity to the rights and interests of the church was not deliberate or systematic; in this as in other things, he acted from passion

—sometimes from caprice. He would allow only this or that doctrine of the church to be defended; he would ruinously limit the grounds of defence; and on these great questions he gave way to the same rank personal partialities, which, in the management of a school, had attracted the notice, and challenged the disrespect, of boys.

Page 66.

Even *that* was possibly barbed, in some of its consequences to Parr, by his own imprudence. The widow (his stepmother) is said to have injured Parr by her rapacity. But, if so, Parr had certainly himself laid the foundation of an early hatred between them, by refusing to lay aside his mourning for his own mother, on the marriage-day of this second Mrs Parr with his father. I do not much quarrel with his conduct on that occasion, considering his age (sixteen) and the relation of her for whom he mourned. But still the act was characteristic of the man, and led to its natural results.

Page 69.

Laying together all the incidents of that time, it is scarcely possible to doubt that Parr conducted himself with great impropriety. Benjamin Heath neither answered the letter in which Parr attempted to clear himself from the charge of exciting the boys of Harrow to insurrection against Heath's authority, nor did he so much as leave his card at Stanmore, in acknowledgment of Parr's call upon himself. As to Mr Smith, the rector, celebrated for his wit and ability, the early associate of Johnson and Garrick, he, from being "the warmest of Parr's friends" (such is Mr Roderick's language), soon became cool, and finally ceased to speak. Mr Roderick does not acquit his friend of the chief blame in this rupture.

Page 69.

Dr Johnstone, however, speaking of the pamphlet as a composition, discovers in it "all the peculiarities of Parr's style—its vigour, its vehemence, its clearness," its *et cætera, et cætera;* and lastly, its "splendid imagery;" and, obviously by way of a specimen of this last quality, he quotes the following most puerile rhetoric: "I had arrayed myself in a panoply of the trustiest armour—in the breastplate of innocence, the shield of the law, the sword of indignation, and the helmet of intrepidity. When I first entered the

lists against these hardy combatants, I determined to throw away the scabbard," and so forth. The *sword* of indignation! Birch-rod he surely means. Most people will think that the bombs of contempt, and the mortars of derision, ought to open upon any person, not having the privilege of childhood, who could write such stilted fustian.

Page 70.

By *meridian*, I here mean the month which exactly bisected his life. Dr Parr lived about eleven months less than eighty years, and he was about two months more than forty when he came to live at Hatton.

Page 74.

Parr's extreme and well-merited unpopularity with an order whom he had, through life, sneered at and misrepresented, is a little disguised to common readers by the fact, that he corresponds with more than one bishop on terms of friendship and confidence. But this arose, generally speaking, in later life, when time sufficient had been allowed for early school-fellows and pupils of his own being raised to the mitre. The logic of the case is, therefore, naturally misinterpreted. His episcopal correspondents were such, not as bishops, but as old acquaintances.

Page 85.

As disputing with a Prince of Wales is something rarer even than waltzing with a Lord Chancellor, or smoking a cigar with the Pope —things which have been done, however—I suppose it may entertain my readers to see the rest of the discussion; especially as it concerns two persons eminent in their day, and one of them still interesting to our literature:—

"As I knew them both so intimately (replied the Prince), you will not deny, that I had the power of more accurately appreciating their respective merits than you can have had. In their manner of teaching, you may judge of my estimation of Markham's superiority —his natural dignity and authority, compared with the Bishop of Worcester's smoothness and softness, and I now add (with proper submission to your authority on such a subject), his experience as a schoolmaster, and his better scholarship."—"Sir" (said Parr), "your Royal Highness began this conversation; and, if you permit it to go on, must tolerate a very different inference."—"Go on" (said the

Prince); I declare that Markham understood Greek better than Hurd; for, when I read Homer, and hesitated about a word, Markham immediately explained it, and then we went on; but, when I hesitated with Hurd, he always referred me to the dictionary; I therefore conclude he wanted to be informed himself."—Sir" (replied Parr), "I venture to differ from your Royal Highness's conclusion. I am myself a schoolmaster; and I think that Dr Hurd pursued the right method, and that Dr Markham failed in his duty.* Hurd desired your Royal Highness to find the word in the lexicon, not because he did not know it, but because he wished you to find by search, and learn it thoroughly. Dr Hurd was not eminent as a scholar; but it is not likely that he would have presumed to teach your Royal Highness, without knowing the lesson himself." —"Have you not changed your opinion of Dr Hurd?" exclaimed the Prince; "I have read a work in which you attack him fiercely." —"Yes, sir, I attacked him on one point which I thought important to letters; and I summoned the whole force of my mind, and took every possible pains to do it well; for I consider Hurd to be a great man. He is celebrated as such by foreign critics, who appreciate justly his wonderful acuteness, sagacity, and dexterity, in doing what he has done with his small stock of learning. There is no comparison, in my opinion, between Markham and Hurd as men of talents. Markham was a pompous schoolmaster—Hurd was a stiff and cold, but a correct gentleman. Markham was at the head of a great school, then of a great college, and finally became an archbishop. In all these stations he had trumpeters of his fame, who called him great, though he published one *concio* only, which has already sunk into oblivion. From a farm-house and village school, Hurd emerged, the friend of Gray and a circle of distinguished men. While fellow of a small college, he sent out works praised by foreign critics, and not despised by our own scholars. He enriched his understanding by study, and sent from the obscurity of a country village, a book, sir, which your royal

* "*Duty:*"—I interrupt the passage for a moment to direct the reader's attention to the preposterous word "duty." The Archbishop might be wrong, as in a matter open to large varieties of method; but assuredly neither he, nor the Bishop of Worcester, is to be burdened for a moment with obligations of *conscience* in the exercise of an art liable to an infinite range of variations in practice.

father is said to have declared made him a bishop. He made himself unpopular in his own profession by the defence of a fantastical system. He had decriers; he had no trumpeters; he was great in and by himself; and perhaps, sir, a portion of that power and adroitness you have manifested in this debate might have been owing to him." Fox, when the Prince was gone, exclaimed in his high tone of voice, "He thought he had caught you, but he caught a Tartar!"

In the last words only, Parr seems to have remembered that he was addressing a prince. In what he said of Hurd's Greek scholarship, and motive for referring the Prince to the lexicon, though probably wrong as to the matter of fact (for Hurd's impulse was laziness), he might be right as to the principle; and at least he was there talking on a point of his own profession, which he might be presumed to understand better than the rest of the company, or at any rate the courtesies of social life obliged the company to suppose that he did. But who can forbear smiling, and thinking of the professor who lectured Hannibal on the art of war, at that passage where Parr, addressing the Prince of Wales, undertakes to characterise Hurd's pretensions as a gentleman?

Page 87.

Johnson had many of the elements which go to the composition of a gentleman in a very high degree, though it is true that these were neutralised, at times, by some one overmastering prejudice or caprice. His silent acquiescence in the royal praise, and the reason on which he justified this acquiescence—*that it did not become him to bandy compliments with his sovereign*, is in the finest spirit of high breeding, and reminds me of a similar test for trying gentlemanly feeling, applied to the English ambassador (Lord Stair) by the Regent Duke of Orleans. The reader probably recollects the case. The Regent had signified, by a motion of his hand, that the Ambassador should enter the coach first; upon which Lord Stair immediately did so, justly feeling that the slightest hesitation on *his* part would have raised a false punctilio, as though the ranks of the two men were so nearly on a level, that the Regent might be forgetting himself, and might need to be set right by the Ambassador. The *act* of Lord Stair dissipated in a moment this false construction. By his instantaneous obedience to the pleasure of

the Regent, he recognised at once his own precedency as a *creation* of the moment, and in that light as a silent proclamation of the supremacy as to rank and power residing in his Royal Highness.

Page 96.

"The Doctor begged me one morning to take him into S. P.'s belfry. Secure from interruption, he proceeded with his intended object, which was, to raise and full (pull?) scientifically the tenth or largest bell. He set to work in silent, solemn formality. It took some time, I suppose a full quarter of an hour; for there was the raising, the full funereal toll, and the regular toll. When it was over, he stalked about the belfry in much pomposity. On recomposing himself, he looked at me with a smile, and said, 'There; what think you of that?' He was evidently very proud of the effort." In a Greek character of Dr Parr by Sir William Jones, among the repositories of his Royal Highness the Duke of Sussex, neither the bell-ringing nor the ox-massacring is overlooked: "*καὶ τὸ ὁλον κωδωνίζειν δυνατος, καὶ παρονομαζειν, καὶ δισκεύειν, καὶ ταυροκοπεῖν.*"—[And, to sum up the Doctor's accomplishments, he was a smart hand at bell-ringing, and as a punster, and at quoit-playing, and at slaughtering bulls.] As to bell-ringing, none but natives of England proper are judges on this art, for elsewhere it has no existence. On the Continent, wheresoever art is applied to bell-ringing, I believe that generally it takes the shape of pure clock-work, as in the *Carillons* of Ostend, &c., which admit of no aid from human hands any more than our own chimes. In Scotland, again, there can be no bell-ringing, as there are no bells. A peal of bells is a thing unknown. But in England, where countless parish churches have peals of eight and ten bells, the art of bell-ringing is very elaborate, and trying in more ways than one. It requires long-disciplined skill, and great muscular power. Dr Parr's arms had been kept in training by half-a-century of successful flagellation. I may add, that the music from a finely-toned set of bells, when heard upon a winding river, in summer, under the farewell lights of setting suns, is the most pathetic in the world.

Page 103.

I am the last person to apologise for that most profligate woman. That men of sense and honour could be found who seriously

doubted of her guilt, is the strongest exemplification, to my mind, of the all-levelling strength in party rage that history records. As little am I likely to join the rare and weak assailants of Sir Walter Scott, whose conduct politically was as upright and as generous as his conduct in private life. Yet, in one single instance, Sir Walter departed from his usual chivalry of feeling, and most unseasonably joined in insulting a woman—dissolute, it is true, beyond example, but at that time fallen, and on that very morning reaping the bitter first fruits of her enormous guilt. Describing the morning of the Coronation, and the memorable repulse of the poor misguided Queen, Sir Walter allowed himself to speak of her as *the great Lady, with her body-guard of blackguards.* These words I doubt not that Sir Walter soon, and often, and earnestly deplored; for the anguish of her mortification, by the testimony of all who witnessed the tumultuous succession of passions that shook her, and convulsed her features, as she argued the point with the officer at the entrance of Westminster Hall, was intense; and those pitied her then who never pitied her before. There were also other reasons that must have drawn a generous regret from Sir Walter, upon remembering these words afterwards. But we all know that it was not in his nature to insult over the fallen, or to sympathise with triumphant power. In fact, he could not foresee her near approaching death; and he was reasonably disgusted with her violence at the moment; and, finally, the words escaped him under circumstances of hurry, which allowed no time for revision. Few indeed are the writers who have so little to blot as this distinguished man.

Page 115.

And perhaps in candour it should be added, under happier fortunes and more prudence in his *liaisons* with the other sex. He was in some degree a dissolute man; but perhaps he might have been otherwise under more noble treatment from the woman of his heart. His unhappiness on this point latterly was great, and there is reason to think that he secretly wished to lay down his life, and resorted to politics as the best means of doing so with reputation. He had a passionate love for an unworthy woman, whom he had strong reasons for thinking unfaithful to him. And, at all events, she had the baseness to trifle with his apparent misery.

Page 118.

It is remarkable, however, that Sir William's Greek is far better than Parr's. Jones's has all the air of the genuine antique: Parr's is villanous.

Page 119.

I say Latin secretary, as indicating an office so far as regards its duties, which really *does* exist, though the emoluments do not. There is a great deal of public work to be executed in Latin, and it is done *gratis*, and by various hands. But, were this an age for increasing the public burdens, I should suggest the propriety of creating anew the formal appointment of Latin secretary, which ought for many reasons never to have been abolished. The Fox Ministry would have done rightly to have restored the office, and to have rewarded Dr Parr by the first appointment.

Page 120.

But surely the brother of Sir Henry Halford (as the warden of Merton, Dr Peter Vaughan, I believe was) needed not to have gone out of his own family connections for such an assistance, since Sir Henry himself writes Latin with ease and effect.

Page 123.

I cannot fancy Heyne as a Latin *exegetes*. The last time I opened a book of his (perhaps it was his Virgil), some sixteen years ago, he was labouring at this well-known phrase—"*regione* viarum." As usual, a rhapsody of resemblances, more or less remote, was accumulated; but if I may be believed, that sole meaning of the word *regio* which throws light upon the expression, that meaning which connects it with the word *rego* in the mathematical sense (*i.e.*, to drive a straight line), was unnoticed. All the rest meant nothing. I closed the book in disgust.

Page 123.

"Dr Busby! a great man, sir—a very great man! He flogged my grandfather."—*Sir Roger de Coverley.*

Page 126.

William Bellenden, a Scotch writer, flourished at the beginning of the seventeenth century, and is said to have been a professor in the University of Paris. At Paris he published, in 1608, his "Cicero

Princeps," a singular work, in which he extracted from Cicero's writings detached remarks; and compressed them into one regular body, containing the rules of monarchical government, with the line of conduct to be adopted, and the virtues proper to be encouraged by the prince himself; and this treatise, when finished, he dedicated, from a principle of patriotism and gratitude, to the son of his master, Henry, then Prince of Wales. Four years afterwards (namely, in 1612), he proceeded to publish another work of a similar nature, which he called "Cicero Consul, Senator, Senatus Romanus," in which he treated the nature of the consular office, and the constitution of the Roman Senate. Finding the works received, as they deserved, with the unanimous approbation of the learned, he conceived the plan of a third work, "De Statu Prisci Orbis," which was to contain a history of the progress of government and philosophy, from the times before the flood, to their various degrees of improvement under the Hebrews, Greeks, and Romans. He had proceeded so far as to print a few copies of this work in 1615, when it seems to have been suggested that his three treatises, "De Statu Principis," "De Statu Republicæ," "De Statu Orbis," being on subjects so nearly resembling each other, there might be a propriety in uniting them into one work, by re-publishing the two former, and entitling the whole "Bellendenus de Statu Orbis." With this view, he recalled the few copies of his last work that were abroad, and after a delay of some months, he published the three treatises together, under their new title, in the year 1615.

In the British Museum, one copy of the book "De Statu Prisci Orbis," dated in 1615, still exists, which the author had probably sent into England as a present, and could not recall; and in all the others the date appears, on a nice inspection, to have been originally MDCXV., and to have had an *I* afterwards added, on the alteration of the author's plan. The editor has shown great ingenuity in clearing up this typographical difficulty. The great work being now completed, Bellenden looked forward with a pretty well-grounded expectation for that applause which his labour and his ingenuity deserved; but his views were disappointed by one of those events that no art of man can foresee or remedy. The vessel in which the whole impression had been embarked was overtaken by a storm before she could reach the English coasts, and foundered with all her cargo.

A very few copies only, which the learned author either kept for his own use, or had sent as presents by private hands, seem to have been preserved from the destruction which awaited the others; and this work of Bellendenus has, therefore, from its scarcity, often escaped the notice of the most diligent collectors.

It is not to be found in the library of the Duke of Argyle (Roxburghe?), nor in that of the late Dr Hunter; neither Morhoffius nor Fabricius had ever seen it; the "Observationes Literariæ" at Frankfort in 1728, which treat learnedly and copiously on scarce books, makes no mention of it. In a word, the single treatises are so rare, that not above ten of them are to be found in all the libraries of England. And of the larger work, it does not appear that more than six copies are known to exist—one in the public library at Cambridge; a second in that of Emanuel College, in the same University, long admired as a well-chosen collection of excellent books; a third in All-Souls' Library at Oxford; and two in the possession of the editors.*

Page 127.

Colman had said, that the verse in the "Pursuits of Literature" was only "a peg to hang the notes upon"—a jest too obvious, perhaps, but also too true, for the irritable author, who had the meanness, amongst some impotent attempts at affecting a grin of nonchalance, to tell his readers that the jest was stolen, and stolen from Pindar! Great was my curiosity on hearing this. A Pindaric jest! What could it be, and where? Was it an Olympic, or a Pythian jest? Why, Pindar, it seems, "said long before Mr Colman, *απο τασσαλω φοξμιγγα λαβε.*" And what then? *He took down his harp from a peg;* that is to say, a literal metallic harp from a literal wooden peg. What earthly connection could *that* have with Mr Colman's jest? Now this, though *in re levissima*, I regard as a downright villany. Mathias tells a clamorous falsehood, in order to convict his antagonist of a theft. The long and the short of the case is—that being stung by a sarcasm, and not having the magnanimity to bear it, he tries vainly to retaliate by a consciously mendacious charge upon his assailant, of having stolen the sarcasm; well know-

* There is another in the library of Shrewsbury School, left by Dr Taylor, editor of Demosthenes, to that foundation.

ing, at the time of making this insinuation, that there was not, nor could be, in the author alleged, any shadow of a sarcasm to steal.

For the "absolute silliness," amongst many hundred passages of pure trifling, or exquisite nonsense, let the reader look to Mathias's long note upon Godwin, and his "*gun of generation;*" where, under an impression that he was lashing some peculiar conceit or caprice of that gentleman, the satirist has unconsciously engaged himself with Hume and his Doctrine of Causation.

I say so much upon this author, because (though almost forgotten at present), in my younger days, he had a splendour of success not much surpassed even by the most popular writers of this present more literary generation; and because, spite of his bad taste, his pedantry, and his cloudy affectations, he had a demon of originality about him, which makes him, after all, worthy of preservation, and even of study.

A strange fact it is, in Dr Parr's literary history, that this same malicious satirist, from whom he received insults so flagrant and so public, at an after period became his all but idolised friend. In saying this, I assume it as a thing admitted universally, that Mr Mathias, and the satirist in question, were one and the same person. Letters from this Mr Mathias are spoken of by Dr Parr in another period of his life, with a fervour of devotion, such as a Roman Catholic limits to the very holiest class of relics.

Page 128.

Dr Parr, but on what particular sense of necessity I pretend not to conjecture, has used the words *textus* for *text*, and *margo* for *margin;* and he apologises for them in the following words:—

"Quod textum et marginem, et alia istiusmodi verba sine ulla præfatione, et quasi παραμυθίᾳ usurpavi, id ne bilem moveat inter eos, qui limatulum præ cœteris et politulum habere judicium sibi videantur:"—*i. e.*, "Whereas I have used the Latin word *textus* for expressing the English word *text*, and *margo* for the *margin of a page*, and have used other words of the same kind, without prefatory explanation, or any semblance of a conciliatory excuse; let not this be any cause of offence amongst those who presume themselves to have a special refinement and delicacy of judgment in comparison with others." And he goes on to say, that spiteful critics of shallow discernment make these cavils, which possibly they would

not make if aware of the answer made to them by Henry Stephens. That learned and able man has brought the question to this point —not so properly refined as effeminately fastidious, would those ears be which could refuse to tolerate such words; *at any rate in a case where all other equivalent expressions are wanting.* Well, let the question then be rested on that footing, and so decided. Nobody in the world, as the reader will collect from another part of this paper, has less sympathy than myself with idle cavillers, or less indulgence towards the scruples which grow out of excessive *Puritanism* in style. Yet in these instances I do not perceive that the scruples are of that character. For I cannot perceive that the questionable words are protected by the reservation of Stephens— *quum alia desint.* Surely *ora libri* expresses *margin*, and *orationis perpetuitas*, or *continuitas sermonis*, might serve to express the idea of text (for the body of the composition, as contra-distinguished from its notes).

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Upon this subject, in its relation, not to Latin, but to classical English, we have an essay in our own times from a writer of great talent, Mr Foster, the Baptist clergyman. It is strange to say that the tendency of that essay is in direct hostility to his own peculiar views. Doctrinally, he contends earnestly for the *peculiar* tenets and mysteries of the Christian economy; and yet, on the other hand, as a man of taste, he would banish all the consecrated terms which express them. Now, this is contradictory. With the peculiar and characteristic language would vanish the peculiar and characteristic doctrines. But, apart from this consequence, it is strange that Mr Foster should overlook the analogical justification of a separate terminology, derived from so many similar cases of far less importance. For example, who complains of the Platonic theology for its peculiar vocabulary? Or, what reproach has it ever been to Jamblichus, to Proclus, to Plotinus, to Synesius, &c., that they wrote almost a sealed dialect to the "profane"—that is, to all the uninitiated.

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Amongst whom, by the way, Bentley stands foremost; whilst Porson is the least felicitous in giving a scholar-like expression to his notes.

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I may add, as equal with the very foremost of them, Immanuel Kant, whose Latin is of the best philosophic character. He had studied as a fellow-pupil with the celebrated Latinist, Ruhnkenius, and had a true sense of elegance in this particular accomplishment. By the way, on this occasion I may observe most peremptorily, that Hobbes was a villanous writer of Latin; and the common story of Lord Bacon's value for him in that character is undoubtedly false. Hobbes was amongst the hacks employed occasionally by Lord Bacon. But not a line of the Latin "De Augmentis" could have been written by Hobbes. As Falconbridge says of his reputed father, "Could he have made this leg? We know his workmanship."

Page 135.

Lord Bacon's style is so much moulded by his own peculiar plastic intellect, that it is difficult to separate the elements of the total compound, that part which represented individually himself, and that which represented his era and his position as a revolutionary philosopher. But from the plainer and less splendid, though perhaps more sublime, mind of Des Cartes, we receive a diction which better reflects the general standard of his era. Of this diction I venture to pronounce, that though far removed from classical Latinity, it is equally far from the other extreme of barbarism, and has an *indoles*, or genius *sui generis*, and its own peculiar laws.

Page 148.

See the fine incidents ("Paradise Lost," b. ix.) of the earliest hostility amongst animals, which first announce to Adam the immeasurable extent of *his own* ruin.

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Coleridge's "Wallenstein."

Page 150.

The criticisms which Dr Parr received upon his epitaphs he bore impatiently. He had lofty notions, with which few people had much sympathy, on the dignity of his art: *magnificabo apostolatum meum*, was his motto. And in reality, having cultivated it a good

deal, and meditated on it still more, he had naturally come to perceive truths and relations of truth (for everything intellectual yields, upon investigation, a world of new views) to which men in general were blind from mere defect of practice and attention. This fretted him; and in some instances it must be acknowledged that the criticisms were both frivolous and vexatious. Could it be credited that Charles Fox, who wrote very passable Greek verses, and other scholars as good, were actually unacquainted with the true Roman sense of the word *Probabilis?* Dr Parr had described Johnson as *probabilis poeta*—meaning, of course, *a respectable poet*—one that wrote creditably, one upon whom a smiling or indulgent toleration might settle. This is the true and sole use of the word in classical Latinity. *Ratio probabilis* is an argument, &c., such as the understanding can submit to—a decent and respectable argument, in contradistinction to one that commands instant and universal assent. So, again, the elegant Gravina, in a passage now lying open before me, says *Probabilis orator*, for *a pretty good speaker.* But Dr Parr's critics clearly understood the word as synonymous with *verisimilis*, or else as answering to the English word *probable*, in the sense of having an overbalance of chances in its favour. *Horresco referens!* such a use of the word *probabilis* would be the merest dog-Latin, and Dr Parr would justly have selected his most tingling birch for the suppression of the rebellious scoundrel who could use it.

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Dr Parr adds—"and who had endeavoured to loosen the strongest obligations of morality." These words are likely to be overlooked, as though they were thrown in merely to round the rhythmus of the sentence, or (if really significant) importing not more than that relaxation of morals which naturally accompanies the shaking of religious sanctions. But more is meant than this, and there is a mystery in the matter which I cannot fathom. For elsewhere (vol. iii. p. 378) he speaks of the destructive consequences of Hume's Essays "to the sacred interests of morality;" and still more pointedly in another place (on Politics, Jurisprudence, &c., vol. iii. p. 283), he speaks of Hume as having "taught the inconsiderate and the innocent to think with diminished horror not of adultery only, but of other impurities too flagitious to be named." What does he mean?

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It is usually taken for granted that Hurd had nothing to say for himself in this case, and was on that account discreetly silent. But *that* is a mistake. He had quite enough to allege against Jortin and Leland, to have turned the tables on their champion; but his motive for silence was perhaps *this*: Parr threatened that, if answered, he would come back "again and again" upon the same ground; and, if treated with sneers, he protested that he would give "no quarter." Now, in such a war, Hurd would have had his hands tied by the restraints of his episcopal dignity.

Page 155.

Gibbon, in his fifty-second chapter, had spoken of White in high terms. "He sustains," says he, "the part of a lively and eloquent advocate, and sometimes rises to the merit of an historian and philosopher."

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Mr Kett, whose position in Oxford enabled him to overlook the whole game, came to the same conclusion; for, in dissuading Dr Parr from coming forward as an active participator in the dispute, he says, "I cannot help considering the whole affair as containing something necessarily injurious to the reputation of all who engage in it." He also admonished the Doctor, "that the unconditional manner in which he gave his assistance ought to induce him to be silent." What Mr Kett meant by silence, was abstinence from the press; but the same reasons applied to oral communications, and in that sense it was no longer possible for Dr Parr to be silent. He had chattered too much.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH.*

THIS book accomplishes a retribution which the world has waited for through more than seventy years. Welcome at any rate by its purpose, it is trebly welcome by its execution, to all hearts that linger indulgently over the frailties of a national favourite long systematically exaggerated—to all hearts that brood indignantly over the genial powers of that favourite too often maliciously undervalued.

A man of original genius, shown to us as revolving through the leisurely stages of a biographical memoir, lays open, to readers prepared for such revelations, two separate theatres of interest: one in his personal career; the other in his works and his intellectual development. Both unfold concurrently: and each borrows a secondary interest from the other: the life from the recollection of the works—the works from the joy and sorrow of the life. There have, indeed, been authors whose great creations, severely preconceived in a region of thought transcendent to all impulses of earth, would have been pretty nearly what they are under any possible changes in the dramatic arrangement of their lives. Happy or not happy—gay or

* The Life and Adventures of Goldsmith. By John Forster.

sad—these authors would equally have fulfilled a mission too solemn and too stern in its obligations to suffer any warping from chance, or to bend before the accidents of life, whether dressed in sunshine or in wintry gloom. But generally this is otherwise. Children of Paradise, like the Miltons of our planet, have the privilege of stars to "dwell apart." But the children of flesh, whose pulses beat too sympathetically with the agitations of mother-earth, cannot sequester themselves in that way. They walk in no such altitudes, but at elevations easily reached by ground-winds of humble calamity. And from that cup of sorrow, which upon all lips is pressed in some proportion, they must submit, by the very tenure on which they hold their gifts, to drink, if not more profoundly than others, yet more perilously as regards the fulfilment of their intellectual mission.

Amongst this household of children, too sympathetically linked to the trembling impulses of earth, stands forward conspicuously Oliver Goldsmith. And there is a belief current, that he was conspicuous, not only in the sense of being constitutionally more flexible than others to the impressions of calamity, in case they had happened to occur, but also that he really met with more than his share of those afflictions. I am disposed to think that this was not so. My trust is, that Goldsmith lived upon the whole a life which, though troubled, was one of average enjoyment. Unquestionably, when reading at midnight, in the middle watch of a century which *he* never reached by one whole generation, this record of one so guileless, so upright, or seeming to be otherwise only in the eyes of those who did not know his difficulties, nor could have understood them; when recurring also to his admirable genius, to the sweet natural gaiety of his oftentimes pathetic humour,

and to the varied accomplishments, from talent or erudition, by which he gave effect to endowments so fascinating—one cannot but sorrow over the strife which he sustained, and over the wrong by which he suffered. A few natural tears fall from every eye at the rehearsal of so much contumely from fools, which he faced unresistingly as one bareheaded under a hailstorm;* and worse to bear than the scorn of fools, was the imperfect sympathy and jealous self-distrusting esteem which he received to the last from friends. Doubtless he suffered much wrong; but so, in one way or other, do most men: he suffered also this special wrong, that in his lifetime he never was fully appreciated by any one friend—something of a counter-movement ever mingled with praise for *him*; he never saw himself enthroned in the heart of any young and fervent admirer; and he was always overshadowed by men less deeply genial, though more showy than himself: but these things happen, and will happen for ever, to myriads amongst the benefactors of earth. Their names ascend in songs of thankful commemoration, yet seldom until the ears are deaf that would have thrilled to the music. And these were the heaviest of Goldsmith's afflictions: what are likely to be thought such—viz., the battles which he fought for his daily bread—I do not number amongst them. To struggle, is not to suffer. Heaven grants to few of us a life of untroubled prosperity, and grants it least of all to its favourites. Charles I. carried, as it was thought by a keen

* I do not allude chiefly to his experience in childhood, when he is reported to have been a general butt of ridicule for his ugliness and his supposed stupidity; since, as regarded the latter reproach, he could not have suffered very long, having already at a childish age vindicated his intellectual place by the verses which opened to him an academic destination. I allude to his mature life, and the supercilious condescension with which even his reputed friends doled out their praises to *him*.

Italian judge of physiognomy, a predestination to misery written in his features. And it is probable that, if any Cornelius Agrippa had then been living, to show him in early life the strife, the bloodshed, the triumphs of enemies, the treacheries of friends, the separation for ever from the familiar faces of his hearth, which darkened the years from 1642 to 1649, Charles would have said, "Prophet of wo! if I bear to live through this vista of seven years, it is because at the further end of it thou showest me the consolation of a scaffold." And yet my own belief is, that in the midst of its deadly agitations and its torments of suspense, probably enough by the energies of hope, or even of anxiety which exalted it, that period of bitter conflict was found by the king a more ennobling life than he *would* have found in the torpor of a prosperity too profound. To be cloyed perpetually is a worse fate than sometimes to stand within the vestibule of starvation; and we need go no further than the confidential letters of the court ladies in this and other countries, to satisfy ourselves how much worse in its effects upon happiness than any condition of alarm and peril, is the lethargic repose of luxury too monotonous, and of security too absolute. If, therefore, Goldsmith's life *had* been one of continual struggle, it would not follow that it had therefore sunk below the standard of ordinary happiness. But the life-struggle of Goldsmith, though severe enough (after all allowances) to challenge a feeling of tender compassion, was not in such a degree severe as has been represented.* He enjoyed two great

* I point this remark, not at Mr Forster, who, upon the whole, shares my opinion as to the tolerable comfort of Goldsmith's life; he speaks, indeed, elsewhere of Goldsmith's depressions; but the question still remains —were they of frequent recurrence, and had they any constitutional root or lodgment? I am inclined to say *no* in both cases.

immunities from suffering that have been much overlooked; and *such* immunities that, in our opinion, four in five of all the people ever connected with Goldsmith's works, as publishers, printers, compositors (that is, men taken at random), have very probably suffered more, upon the whole, than he. The immunities were these:—1st, from any *bodily* taint of low spirits. He had a constitutional gaiety of heart; an elastic hilarity; and, as he himself expresses it, "a knack of hoping"—which knack could not be bought with Ormus and with Ind, nor hired for a day with the peacock-throne of Delhi. How easy was it to bear the brutal affront of being to his face described as "*Doctor minor*," when one hour or less would dismiss the *Doctor major*, so invidiously contradistinguished from himself, to a struggle with scrofulous melancholy; whilst *he*, if returning to solitude and a garret, was returning also to habitual cheerfulness. *There* lay one immunity, beyond all price, from a mode of strife to which others, by a large majority, are doomed—strife with bodily wretchedness. Another immunity he had of almost equal value, and yet almost equally forgotten by its biographers—viz., from the responsibilities of a family. Wife and children he had not. They it is that, being a man's chief blessings, create also for him the deadliest of his anxieties, that stuff his pillow with thorns, that surround his daily path with snares. Suppose the case of a man who has helpless dependants of this class upon himself summoned to face some sudden failure of his resources: how shattering to the power of exertion, and, above all, of exertion by an organ so delicate as the creative intellect, dealing with subjects so coy as those of imaginative sensibility, to know that instant ruin attends his failure. Success in such paths of literature might at the best be doubtful; but success is

impossible, with any powers whatever, unless in a genial state of those powers; and this geniality is to be sustained in the case supposed, whilst the eyes are fixed upon the most frightful of abysses yawning beneath his feet. He is to win his inspiration for poetry or romance from the prelusive cries of infants clamouring for daily bread. Now, on the other hand, in the case of an extremity equally sudden alighting on the head of a man in Goldsmith's position, having no burden to support but the trivial one of his own personal needs, the resources are endless for gaining time enough to look around. Suppose him ejected from his lodgings; let him walk into the country, with a pencil and a sheet of paper; there, sitting under a hay-stack for one morning, he may produce what will pay his expenses for a week: a day's labour will carry the sustenance of ten days. Poor may be the trade of authorship, but it is as good as that of a slave in Brazil, whose one hour's work will defray the twenty-four hours' living. As a reader, or corrector of proofs, any decent Latin and French scholar (like Goldsmith) would always have enjoyed a preference, I presume, at any eminent printing-office. This, again, would have given him time for looking round; or he might perhaps have obtained the same advantage for deliberation from some confidential friend's hospitality. In short, Goldsmith enjoyed the two privileges—the one subjective, the other objective—which, when uniting in the same man, would prove more than a match for all difficulties that *could* arise in a literary career to him who was at once a man of genius so popular, of talents so versatile, of reading so various, and of opportunities so large for still more extended reading. The subjective privilege lay in his buoyancy of animal spirits; the objective in his freedom from responsibilities. Gold-

smith wanted very little more than Diogenes: now Diogenes *could* only have been robbed of his tub:* which, perhaps, was about as big as most of poor Goldsmith's sitting-rooms, and far better ventilated. So that the liability of these two men, cynic and non-cynic, to the kicks of fortune was pretty much on a par; whilst Goldsmith had the advantage of a better temper for bearing them, though certainly Diogenes had the better climate for soothing his temper.

But it may be imagined, that if Goldsmith were thus fortunately equipped for authorship, on the other hand, the position of literature, as a money-making resource, was in Goldsmith's days less advantageous than ours. We are not of that opinion; and the representation by which Mr Forster endeavours to sustain it seems to us a showy but untenable refinement. The outline of his argument is, that the aristocratic patron had, in Goldsmith's day, by the progress of society, disappeared—he belonged to the past; that the "mercenary" publisher had taken his place—he represented the ugly present; but that the great reading public (that true and equitable patron, as some fancy)

* Which tub the reader may fancy to have been only an old tar barrel; but, if so, he is wrong. Isaac Casaubon, after severe researches into the nature of that tub, ascertained to the general satisfaction of Christendom that it was not of wood, or within the restorative powers of a cooper, but of earthenware, and, therefore, once shattered by a horse's kick, quite past repair. In fact, the home of Diogenes was a large oil jar, such as the remnant of the forty thieves lurked in, when waiting for their captain's signal from Ali Baba's house; and in Attica, it must have cost fifteen shillings, supposing that the philosopher did not steal it. Consequently a week's loss of house-room and credit to Oliver Goldsmith, at the rate of living then prevalent in Grub Street, was pretty much the same thing in money value as the loss to Diogenes of his crockery house by burglary, or in any nocturnal lark of young Attic winebibbers. The underwriters would have done an insurance upon either man at pretty much the same premium.

had not yet matured its means of effectual action upon literature: this "reading public" virtually, perhaps, belonged to the future. All this I steadfastly deny. No doubt the old full-blown patron, *en grand costume*, with his heraldic bearings emblazoned at the head of the Dedication, was dying out, like the golden pippin. But he still lingered in sheltered situations. And part of the machinery by which patronage had ever moved—viz., the use of influence for obtaining subscriptions—was still in capital working order; a fact which we know from Goldsmith himself (see the "Inquiry"), for he tells us that a popular mode of publication amongst bad authors, and certainly it needed no publisher's countersign, was by means of subscription papers: upon which, as I believe, a considerable instalment was usually paid down when as yet the book existed only by way of title-page, supposing that the whole sum was not even paid *up*. Then, as to the publisher, *he* could not have been a weed first springing up in Goldsmith's time, but must always have been an indispensable broker or middleman between the author and the world. In the days even of Horace and Martial, the book-*seller* (bibliopola) clearly acted as book-*publisher*. Amongst other passages proving this, and showing undeniably that Martial at least had sold the copyright of his work to *his* publisher, is one arguing pretty certainly that the price of a gay drawing-room copy must have been hard upon £1 : 11 : 6d. . Did ever any man hear the like? A New York newspaper would have been too happy to pirate the whole of Martial, had he been three times as big, at the small cost of threepence; *i. e.*, six cents. Now, it cannot be supposed that Martial, a gay, light-hearted fellow, willing to let the public have his book for a shilling, or perhaps for love, had been the person to put that ridiculous price upon it. We may

conclude that it was the publisher. As to the public; *that* respectable character must always have constituted the true and final court of appeal, silently defying alike the *prestige* of patronage and the intriguing mysteries of publishing. Lordly patronage might fill the sails of one edition, and masterly publishing of three. But the books that ran contagiously through the educated circles, or that lingered amongst them for a generation, must have owed their success to the unbiassed feelings of the reader—not overawed by authority, not mystified by artifice. Varying, however, in whatever proportion as to power, the three possible parties to an act of publication will always be seen intermittingly at work—the voluptuous, self-indulging public, and the insidious publisher, of course; but even the browbeating patron still exists in a new *avatar*. Formerly he made his descent upon earth in the shape of Dedicatee; and it is true that this august being, to whom dedications burned incense upon an altar, withdrew into sunset and twilight during Goldsmith's period; but he still revisits the glimpses of the moon in the shape of author. When the *auctoritas* of a peer could no longer sell a book by standing at the head of a dedication, it lost none of its power when standing on the title-page as the author. Vast catalogues might be composed of books and pamphlets that have owed a transient success to no other cause on earth than the sonorous title, or the distinguished position, of those who wrote them. Ceasing to patronise other people's books, the grandee has still power to patronise his own. All *celebrities* have this form of patronage. And, for instance, had the boy Jones * (otherwise called Inigo Jones) pos-

* It may be necessary to explain, for the sake of the many persons who have come amongst the reading public since the period of the incident referred to, that this was a boy called Jones, who was continually entering

sessed enough of book-making skill to forge a plausible curtain-lecture, as overheard by himself when concealed in Her Majesty's bedroom, ten steam-presses working day and night would not have supplied the public demand; and even Her Majesty must herself have sent for a large-paper copy, were it only to keep herself *au courant* of English literature. In short, first, the extrinsic patronage of books; secondly, the self-patronage of books in right of their merits; and, thirdly, the artificial machineries for diffusing the knowledge of their existence, are three forces in current literature that ever *have* existed, and must exist, in some imperfect degree. Horace recognises them in his

"Non Dî, non homines, non concessere columnæ."

The *Dî* are the paramount public, arbitrating finally on the fates of books, and generally on some just ground of judgment, though it may be fearfully exaggerated on the scale of importance. The *homines* are the publishers; and a sad *homo* the publisher sometimes is, particularly when he commits insolvency. But the *columnæ* are those pillars of state, the grandees of our own age, or any other patrons, that support the golden canopy of our transitory pomps, and thus shed an alien glory of coloured light from above upon the books falling within that privileged area.

I am not, therefore, of Mr Forster's opinion, that Goldsmith fell upon an age less favourable to the expansion of literary powers, or to the attainment of literary distinction, than any other. The patron might be a tradition, but the public was not therefore a bare prophecy.

Buckingham Palace clandestinely, was as regularly ejected by the police, but with respectable pertinacity constantly returned, and on one occasion effected a lodgment in the royal bedchamber. Some happy wit, in just admiration of such perseverance and impudence, christened him by the name of the great architect as *In-I-go Jones*.

My lord's trumpets had ceased to sound, but the *vox populi* was not therefore muffled. The means, indeed, of diffusive advertisement and of rapid circulation, the combinations of readers into reading societies, and of roads into iron networks, were as yet imperfectly developed. These gave a potent stimulus to periodic literature. And a still more operative difference between ourselves and them is, that a new class of people has since then entered our reading public—viz., the class of artisans and of all below the gentry, which working class was in Goldsmith's day a cipher as regarded any real encouragement to literature. In our days, if the "Vicar of Wakefield" had been published as a Christmas tale, it would have produced a fortune to the writer. In Goldsmith's time, few below the gentry were readers on any large scale. So far there really *was* a disadvantage; but it was a disadvantage which applied chiefly to novels. The new influx of readers in our times, the collateral affluents into the main river from the mechanic and provincial sections of our population, which have centupled the volume of the original current, cannot be held as telling favourably upon literature, or telling at all, except in the departments of popularised science, of religion, of fictitious tales, and of journalism. To be a reader, is no longer, as once it was, to be of a meditative turn. To be a *very* popular author, is no longer that honorary distinction which once it might have been amongst a more elevated, because more select, body of readers. I do not say this invidiously, or with any special reference. But it is evident that writers and readers must often act and react for reciprocal degradation. A writer of this day, either in France or England, to be *very* popular, must be a story-teller—which is a function of literature neither very noble in itself, nor,

secondly, tending to permanence. All novels whatever, the best equally with the worst, have faded almost with the generation that produced them. This is a curse written as a superscription above the whole class. The modes of combining characters, the particular objects selected for sympathy, the diction, and often the manners,* hold up an imperfect mirror to any generation other than their own. And the reader of novels that belong to any obsolete era, whilst acknowledging the skill of the groupings, or the beauty of the situations, misses the echo to that particular revelation of human nature which has met him in the social aspects of his own day; or too often he is perplexed by an expression which, having dropped into a lower use, disturbs the unity of the impression; or he is revolted by a coarse sentiment, which increasing refinement has made unsuitable to the sex or to the rank of the character. How bestial and degrading at this day seem many of the scenes in Smollett! How coarse are the ideals of Fielding!—his odious Squire Western, his odious Tom Jones! What a gallery of faded histrionic masqueraders is thrown open in the novels of Richardson, powerful

* Often, but not so uniformly (the reader will think) as the diction, because the manners are sometimes not those of the writer's own age, being ingenious adaptations to meet the modern writer's conjectural ideas of ancient manners. These, however, even in Sir Walter Scott, are precisely the most mouldering parts in the entire architecture, being always (as, for instance, in "Ivanhoe") fantastic, caricatured, and betraying the true modern ground gleaming through the artificial tarnish of antiquity. All novels, in every language, are hurrying to decay; and hurrying by *internal* changes, were those all; but in the meantime the everlasting life and fertility of the human mind is for ever accelerating this hurry by *superseding* them—*i. e.*, by an external change. Old forms, fading from the interest, or even from the comprehension, have no chance at all as against new forms embodying the same passions. It is only in the grander passions of poetry, allying themselves with forms more abstract and permanent, that such a conflict of the old with the new is possible.

as they were once found by the two leading nations of the earth.* A popular writer, therefore, who, *in order* to be popular, must speak through novels, speaks to what is least permanent in human sensibilities. That is already to be self-degraded. *Secondly*, because the novel-reading class is by far the most comprehensive one; and being such, must count as a large majority amongst its members those who are poor in capacities of thinking, and are passively resigned to the instinct of immediate pleasure—to these the writer must chiefly humble himself: he must study *their* sympathies, must assume them, must give them back. In our days he must give them back even their own street slang—so servile is the modern novelist's dependence on his *canaille* of an audience. In France, amongst the Sues, &c., it has been found necessary to give back even the closest portraits of obscene atrocities that shun the light, and burrow only in the charnel-houses of vast manufacturing towns. Finally, the very principle of commanding attention only by the interest of a tale, which means the interest of a momentary curiosity, destined to vanish for ever in a sense of satiation, and the interest of a momentary suspense, that, having once collapsed, can never be rekindled, is in itself a confession of reliance upon the meaner functions of the mind. The result from all which is, that to be popular in the most extensive walk of popularity—that is, as a novelist—a writer must generally be in a very considerable degree self-degraded by sycophancy to the lowest order of minds, and cannot (except for mercenary purposes) think himself advantageously placed.

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* "*By the two leading nations of the earth:*"—viz., our own and the French. It was little known at any time, and is now forgotten, that Rousseau, Diderot, and all the leading minds in France, made an idol of Richardson, even more consecrated than amongst ourselves.

To have missed, therefore, this enormous expansion of the reading public, however unfortunate for Goldsmith's purse, was a great escape for his intellectual purity. Every man has two-edged tendencies lurking within himself, pointing in one direction to what will expand the elevating principles of his nature, pointing in another to what will tempt him to its degradation. A mob is a dreadful audience for chafing and irritating the latent vulgarisms of the human heart. Exaggeration and caricature, before such a tribunal, become inevitable, and sometimes almost a duty. The genial but not very delicate humour of Goldsmith would in such circumstances have slipped, by the most natural of transitions, into buffoonery; the unaffected pathos of Goldsmith would, by a monster audience, have been debauched into theatrical sentimentality. All the motions of Goldsmith's nature moved in the direction of the true, the natural, the sweet, the gentle. In the quiet times, politically speaking, through which his course of life travelled, he found a musical echo to the tenor of his own original sensibilities. In the architecture of European history, as it unfolded its proportions along the line of his own particular experience, there was a symmetry with the proportions of his own unpretending mind. Our revolutionary age would have unsettled his brain. The colossal movements of nations, from within and from without; the sorrow of the times, which searches so deeply; the grandeur of the times, which aspires so loftily; these forces, acting for the last fifty years by secret sympathy upon our fountains of thinking and impassioned speculation, have raised them from depths never visited by our fathers, into altitudes too dizzy for *their* contemplating. This generation and the last, with their dreadful records, would have untuned Goldsmith for writing in the key that suited him;

and *us* they would have untuned for understanding his music, had we not learned to understand it in childhood, before the muttering hurricanes in the upper air had begun to reach our young ears, and forced them away to the thundering overhead, from the carolling of birds amongst earthly bowers.

Goldsmith, therefore, as regards the political aspects of his own times, was fortunately placed; a thrush or a nightingale is hushed by the thunderings which are awakening to Jove's eagle. But an author stands in relation to other influences than political; and some of these are described by Mr Forster as peculiarly unfavourable to comfort and respectability at the era of Goldsmith's novitiate in literature. Will Mr Forster excuse me for quarrelling with his whole doctrine upon this subject—a subject and a doctrine continually forced upon attention in these days, by the extending lines of our own literary order, and continually refreshed in warmth of colouring by the contrast, as regards *social* consideration, between our own literary body and the corresponding order in France. The questions arising have really a general interest, as well as a special one in connection with Goldsmith; and therefore I will stir them a little, not with any view of exhausting the philosophy that is applicable to the case, but simply of amusing some readers (since Pliny's remark on history is much more true of any literary anecdotage—viz., that "*quoquo* modo scripta delectat"), and with the more ambitious purpose of recalling some other readers from precipitate conclusions upon a subject where nearly all that is most plausible happens to be most untrue.

Mr Forster, in his views upon the *social* rights of literature, is rowing pretty nearly in the same boat as Mr Carlyle in *his* views upon the rights of labour. Each

denounces, or by implication denounces, as an oppression and a nuisance, what I believe to be a necessity inalienable from the economy and structure of our society. Some years ago Mr Carlyle offended us all (or all of us that were interested in social philosophy), by enlarging on a social affliction, which few indeed needed to see exposed, but most men would have rejoiced to see remedied, if it were but on paper, and by way of tentative suggestion. Precisely at that point, however, where his aid was invoked, Mr Carlyle halted. So does Mr Forster with regard to *his* grievance; he states it, and we partly understand him —as ancient Pistol says, "we hear him with ears;" and when we wait for him to go on, saying, "Well, here's a sort of evil in life, how would you redress it? You've shown, or you've made, another hole in the tin-kettle of society; how do you propose to tinker it?"—behold, he is suddenly almost silent! But this cannot be allowed. The right to insist upon a well-known grievance cannot be granted to that man (Mr Carlyle, for instance, or Mr Forster) who uses it as matter of blame and denunciation, unless at the same time he points out the methods by which it could have been prevented. He that simply bemoans an evil has a right to his moan, though he should make no pretensions to a remedy; but he that criminates, that imputes the evil as a fault, that charges the evil upon selfishness or neglect lurking in some alterable arrangements of society, has no right to do so, unless he can instantly suggest the remedy; for the very first step by which he could have learned that the evil involved a blame, the first step that could have entitled him to denounce it as a wrong, must have been that step which brought him within the knowledge (wanting to everybody else) that it admitted of a cure. A wrong it could not

have been even in *his* eyes, so long as it was a necessity, nor a ground of complaint, until the cure appeared to him a possibility. And the overriding motto for these parallel speculations of Messrs Carlyle and Forster, in relation to the frailties of our social system, ought to have been—"*Sanabilibus ægrotamus malis.*" (*We are sick—but by maladies that are curable.*) Unless with this watchword, they had no right to commence their crusading march. *Curable* evils justify complaints; the incurable justify only prayers.

Why it was that Mr Carlyle, in particular, halted so steadily at the point where his work of love was first beginning, it is not difficult to guess. As the "statutes at large" have not one word against the liberty of unlicensed hypothesis, it is conceivable that Mr Carlyle might have indulged a little in that agreeable pastime; but this, he was well aware, would have brought him in one moment under the fire of Political Economy, from the whole vast line of its modern batteries. These gentlemen, the economists, would have torn to ribands, within fifteen minutes, any *positive* speculation for amending the evil. It was better, therefore, to keep within the trenches of the blank negative, pointing to everything as *wrong*, horribly wrong, but never hinting at the mysterious correction of the wrong; which, to this day, we grieve to say, remains as mysterious as ever.*

* It ought by this time to be known equally amongst governments and philosophers, that for the state to promise with sincerity the absorption of surplus labour, as fast as it accumulates, cannot be postulated as a duty, until it can first be demonstrated as a possibility. This was forgotten, however, by Mr Carlyle, whose vehement complaints that the arable field without a ploughman should be in one county, whilst in another county was the stout ploughman without a field—and sometimes (which was worse still) that the surplus ploughmen should far outnumber

Passing to Mr Forster, who (being capable of a splendour so original) disappoints us most when he reminds us of Mr Carlyle, by the most disagreeable of that gentleman's phraseological forms; and, in this instance, by a speculation twin-sister to the economic one just noticed; I beg to premise that, in anything here said, it is far from my wish to express disaffection to the cause of my literary brothers. I grudge them nothing that they are ever likely to get. I wish even that the House of Commons would see cause for creating state benefices in behalf of us all. But what is the use of benevolently bequeathing larks for dinner to all literary men, in all time coming, if the sky must fall before they can bag our bequest? Suffer me to discuss Mr Forster's views, not perhaps according to any arrangement of his, but according to the order in which they come back to my own remembrance.

Goldsmith's period, Mr Forster thinks, was bad—not merely by the transitional misfortune (before noticed) of coming too late for the patron, and too soon for the public (which is the compound ill luck of being a day after one fair, and a month too soon for the next), but also by some co-operation in this evil destiny through mis-

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the surplus fields—certainly proceeded on the secret assumption that all this was within the remedial powers of the state. The same doctrine was more openly avowed by various sections of our Radicals, who (in their occasionally insolent petitions to Parliament) many times asserted that one main use and function of a government was to find work for everybody. At length (February and March, 1848) we see this doctrine solemnly adopted by a French body of rulers—self-appointed, indeed, or perhaps appointed by their wives, and so far sure, in a few weeks, to be answerable for nothing; but, on the other hand, adopting it as a practical *undertaking*, in the lawyer's sense, and by no means as a mere gaiety of rhetoric. Meantime, they themselves will be "broken" before they will have had time for being reproached with broken promises, though neither fracture is likely to require much above the length of a quarantine.

conduct on the part of authors themselves. Not "the circumstances" only of authors were damaged, but the "literary character" itself. I am sorry to hear *that*. But, as long as they did not commit murder, I have a great indulgence for the frailties of authors. If ever the "benefit of clergy" could be fairly pleaded, it might have been by Grub Street for petty larceny. The "clergy" they surely could have pleaded; and the call for larceny was so audible in their condition, that in *them* it might often be called an instinct of self-preservation, which surely was not implanted in man to be disobeyed. One word allow me to say on these three topics:—1. the condition of the literary body in its hard-working section at the time when Goldsmith belonged to it; 2. upon the condition of that same body in England as compared with the corresponding body in France; 3. upon the condition of the body in relation to patronage purely *political*.

1. The pauperised (or Grub Street) section of the literary body, at the date of Goldsmith's taking service amongst it, was (in Mr Forster's estimate) at its very lowest point of depression. And one comic presumption in favour of that notion I myself remember—viz., that Smart, the prose translator of Horace, and a well-built scholar, actually *let* himself out to a monthly journal on a regular lease of ninety-nine years.* What could move the rapacious publisher to draw the lease for this monstrous term of years, I cannot conjecture. Surely the villain might have been content with threescore years and ten. But think, reader, of poor Smart two years after, upon another publisher's applying to him vainly for contributions, and angrily demanding what possible objection

* When writing this passage, I was not aware that Mr Forster had himself noticed the case.

could be made to offers so liberal, being reduced to answer —"No objection, sir, whatever, except an unexpired term of ninety-seven years yet to run." The publisher saw that he must not apply again in *that* century; and, in fact, Smart could no longer let himself, but must be sublet (if let at all) by the original lessee. Query now—was Smart entitled to vote as a freeholder, and Smart's children (if any were born during the currency of the lease), would they be serfs, and *ascripti prelo*? Goldsmith's own terms of self-conveyance to Griffiths—the terms we mean on which he "conveyed" his person and free-agency to the uses of the said Griffiths (or his assigns?)—do not appear to have been much more dignified than Smart's in the quality of the *conditions*, though considerably so in the duration of the *term*; Goldsmith's lease being only for one year, and not for ninety-nine, so that he had (as the reader perceives) a clear ninety-eight years at his own disposal. I suspect that poor Oliver, in his guileless heart, never congratulated himself on having made a more felicitous bargain. Indeed, it was not so bad, if everything be considered; Goldsmith's situation at the time was bad; and for that very reason the lease (otherwise monstrous) was *less* bad. He was to have lodging, board, and "a small salary," *very* small, I suspect; and in return for all these blessings, he had nothing to do, but to sit still at a table, to work hard from an early hour in the morning until two P.M. (at which elegant hour we presume that the parenthesis of dinner occurred), but also—which, not being an article in the lease, might have been set aside, on a motion before the King's Bench—to endure without mutiny the correction and revisal of all his MSS. by *Mrs* Griffiths, wife to Dr Griffiths the lessee. This affliction of Mrs *Dr* Griffiths surmounting his shoulders, and controlling his pen, seems

to us not at all less dreadful than that of Sinbad when indorsed with the old man of the sea; and we, in Goldsmith's place, should certainly have tried how far Sinbad's method of abating the nuisance had lost its efficacy by time—viz., the tempting our oppressor to get drunk once or twice a-day, and then suddenly throwing Mrs Dr Griffith off her perch. From that "bad eminence" which she had audaciously usurped, what harm could there be in thus dismounting this "old *woman* of the sea?" And as to an occasional thump or so on the head, which Mrs Dr Griffiths might have caught in tumbling, that was *her* look-out; and might besides have improved her style. For really now, if the candid reader will believe us, we know a case, odd certainly but very true, where a young man, an author by trade, who wrote pretty well, happening to tumble out of a first-floor in London, was afterwards observed to grow very perplexed and almost unintelligible in his style; until some years later, having the good fortune (like Wallenstein at Vienna) to tumble out of a two-pair-of-stairs window, he slightly fractured his skull, but, on the other hand, recovered the brilliancy of his long-fractured style. Some people there are of our acquaintance who would need to tumble out of the garrets before they could seriously improve their style.

Certainly these conditions—the hard work, the being chained by the leg to the writing-table, and above all the having one's pen chained to that of Mrs Dr Griffiths—*do* seem to countenance Mr Forster's idea, that Goldsmith's period was the purgatory of authors. And we freely confess, that excepting Smart's ninety-nine years' lease, or the contract between the Devil and Dr Faustus, we never heard of a harder bargain driven with any literary man. Smart, Faustus, and Goldsmith, were clearly overreached. Yet,

after all, was this treatment in any important point (excepting as regards Dr Faustus) worse than that given to the whole college of Grub Street, in the days of Pope? The first edition of the "Dunciad" dates from 1727: Goldsmith's matriculation in Grub Street dates from 1757—just thirty years later; which is one generation. And it is important to remember that Goldsmith, at this time in his twenty-ninth year, was simply an usher at an obscure boarding-school; had never practised writing for the press; and had not even himself any faith at all in his own capacity for writing. It is a singular fact, which we have on Goldsmith's own authority, that until his thirtieth year (that is, the year he spent with Dr and Mrs Griffiths) it never entered into his head that literature was his natural vocation. That vanity, which has been so uncandidly, and sometimes so falsely, attributed to Goldsmith, was compatible, we see, if at all it existed, with the humblest estimate of himself. Still, however much this deepens our regard for a man of so much genius united with so much simplicity and unassumingness, humility would not be likely to raise his salary; and we must not forget that his own want of self-esteem would reasonably operate on the terms offered by Griffiths. A man who regarded himself as little more than an amanuensis, could not expect much better wages than an under-gardener, which perhaps he had. And, weighing all this, we see little to have altered in the lease—that was fair enough; only, as regarded the execution of the lease, we really must have protested, under any circumstances, against Mrs Dr Griffiths. That woman would have broken the back of a camel, which must be supposed tougher than the heart of an usher. There we should have made a ferocious stand; and should have struck for much higher wages, before we could have

brought our mind to think of capitulation. It is remarkable, however, that this year of humble servitude was not only (or, as if by accident) the epoch of Goldsmith's intellectual development, but also the occasion of it. Nay, if all were known, perhaps it may have been to Mrs Dr Griffiths in particular that we owe that revolution in his self-estimation which made Goldsmith an author by deliberate choice. Hag-ridden every day, he must have plunged and kicked violently to break loose from this harness; but, not impossibly, the very effort of contending with the hag, when brought into collision with his natural desire to soothe the hag, and the inevitable counter-impulse in any continued practice of composition, towards the satisfaction at the same time of his own reason and taste, must have furnished a most salutary *palæstra* for the education of his literary powers. When one lives at Rome, one must do as they do at Rome: when one lives with a hag, one must accommodate one's-self to haggish caprices; besides, that once in a month the hag might be right; or if not, and supposing her *always* in the wrong, which perhaps is too much to assume even of Mrs Dr Griffiths, *that* would but multiply the difficulties of reconciling *her* demands with the demands of the general reader and of Goldsmith's own judgment. And in the pressure of these difficulties would lie the very value of this rough Spartan education. Rope-dancing cannot be very agreeable in its elementary lessons; but it must be a capital process for calling out the agilities that slumber in a man's legs.

Still, though these hardships turned out so beneficially to Goldsmith's intellectual interests, and, consequently, so much to the advantage of all who have since delighted in his works, not the less on that account they *were* hardships, and hardships that imposed heavy degradation. So far,

therefore, they would seem to justify Mr Forster's characterisation of Goldsmith's period by comparison with Addison's period * on the one side, and our own on the other. But, on better examination, it will be found that this theory is sustained only by an unfair selection of the antithetic objects in the comparison. Compare Addison's age *generally* with Goldsmith's—authors, prosperous or unprosperous, in each age taken indiscriminately—and the two ages will be found to offer "much of a muchness." But, if you take the paupers of one generation to contrast with the grandees of another, how is there any justice in the result? Goldsmith at starting was a penniless man. Except by random accidents, he had not money enough to buy a rope, in case he had fancied himself in want of such a thing. Addison, on the contrary, was the son of a tolerably rich man; lived gaily at a most aristocratic college (Magdalen), in a most aristocratic university; formed early and brilliant connections with the political party that were magnificently preponderant until the last four years of Queen Anne; travelled on the Continent, not (like Goldsmith) as a mendicant, housing with owls, and thankful for the bounties of a village fair, but with appointments and introductions equal to those of a young nobleman; and became a secretary of state, not by means of his "delicate humour," as Mr Forster chooses to suppose, but through splendid patronage, and (speaking *Hibernicé*) through a "strong back." He was *backed* by the Whig party. His bad verses, his Blenheim, his Cato in

* If Addison died (as I think he did) in 1717, then, because Goldsmith commenced authorship in 1757, there would be forty years between the two periods. But, as it would be fairer to measure from the *centre* of Addison's literary career—*i. e.*, from 1707—the difference between their eras would be just half-a-century.

later days, and other rubbish, had been the only part of his works that aided his rise; and even these would have availed him little, had he not originally possessed a *locus standi*, from which he could serve his artilleries of personal flatteries with commanding effect, and could *profit* by his successes. As to the really exquisite part of his writings, *that* did him no yeoman's service at all, nor *could* have done; for he was a made man, and had almost received notice to quit this world of prosperous whiggery, before he had finished those exquisite prose miscellanies. Pope, Swift, Gay, Prior, &c., all owed their social positions to early accidents of good connections, and sometimes of luck, which would not indeed have supplied the place of personal merit, but which gave lustre and effect to merit where it existed in strength. There were authors quite as poor as Goldsmith in the Addisonian age; there were authors quite as rich as Pope, Steele, &c., in Goldsmith's age, and having the same social standing. Goldsmith struggled with so much distress, not because his period was more inauspicious, but because his connections and starting advantages were incomparably less important. His profits were so trivial, because he started with a capital next to none.

So far, as regards the comparison between Goldsmith's age and the one immediately before it. But now, as regards the comparison with our own, removed by two generations, can it be said truly that the literary profession has risen in estimation, or is rising? There is a difficulty in making such an appraisement; and from different minds there would proceed very different appraisements; and even from the same mind, surveying the case at different stations. For, on the one hand, if a greater breadth of social respectability catches the eye on looking carelessly

over the body of our modern literati, which may be owing chiefly to the large increase of gentlemen that in our day have entered the field of literature; on the other hand, the hacks and *handicraftsmen*, whom the shallow education of newspaper journalism has introduced to the press, and whom poverty compels to labours not meriting the name of literature, are correspondingly expanding their files. There is, however, one reason from analogy, which may incline us to suppose that a higher consideration is now generally conceded to the purposes of literature, and, consequently, a juster estimate made of the persons who minister to those purposes. Literature—provided we use that word not for the mere literature of knowledge, but for the literature of power—using it for literature as it speaks to what is genial in man—viz., to the human *spirit*, and *not* for literature (falsely so called) as it speaks to the meagre understanding—is a fine art; and not only so, it is the supreme of the fine arts; nobler, for instance, potentially, than painting, or sculpture, or architecture. Now *all* the fine arts, *that popularly are called such*, have risen in esteem within the last generation. The most aristocratic of men will now ask into his own society an artist, whom fifty years ago he would have transferred to the house-steward's table. And why? Not simply because more attention having been directed to the arts, more notoriety has gathered about the artist—for that sort of *éclat* would not work any durable change; but it is because the interest in the arts having gradually become much more of an enlightened interest, the public has been slowly trained to fix its attention upon the *intellect* which is presupposed in the arts, rather than upon the offices of *pleasure* to which they minister. The fine arts have now come to be regarded rather as powers that are to mould, than as

luxuries that are to embellish. And it has followed that artists are valued more by the elaborate agencies which they guide, than by the fugitive sensations of wonder or sympathy which they evoke.

Now this is a change honourable to both sides. The public has altered its estimate of certain men; and yet has not been able to do so, without previously enlarging its idea of the means through which those men operate. It could not elevate the men, without previously elevating itself. But, if so, then, in correcting their appreciation of the fine arts, the public must simultaneously have corrected their appreciation of literature; because, whether men have or have not been in the habit of regarding literature as a fine art, this they must have felt—viz., that literature, in its more genial functions, works by the very same organs as the liberal arts, speaks to the same heart, operates through the same compound nature, and educates the same deep sympathies with mysterious ideals of beauty. *There* lies the province of the arts usually acknowledged as fine or liberal: *there* lies the province of fine or liberal literature. And with justifiable pride a *litterateur* may say, that *his* fine art wields a sceptre more potent than any other; literature is more potent than other fine arts, because *deeper* in its impressions according to the usual tenor of human sensibilities; because more *extensive,* in the degree that books are more diffused than pictures or statues; because more *durable,* in the degree that language is durable beyond marble or canvas, and in the degree that vicarious powers are opened to books for renewing their phœnix immortality through unlimited translations: powers denied to painting except through copies that are feeble, and denied to sculpture except to casts that are costly.

I infer that, as the fine arts have been rising, literature (on the secret feeling that essentially it moves by the same powers) must also have been rising; that, as the arts will continue to rise, literature will continue to rise; and that, in both cases, the men, the ministers, must ascend in social consideration as the things, the ministrations, ascend. But there is another form, in which the same result offers itself to my notice; and this should naturally be the last paragraph in this section 1, but, as I have little room to spare, it may do equally well as the first paragraph in section 2—viz., on the condition of our own literary body by comparison with the same body in France.

2. Who were the people amongst ourselves, that, throughout the eighteenth century, chiefly came forward as undervaluers of literature? They belonged to two very different classes—the aristocracy and the commercial body, who agreed in the thing, but on very different impulses. To the mercantile man, the author was an object of ridicule, from natural poverty; *natural*, because there was no regular connection between literature and any mode of money-making. By accident the author might *not* be poor, but professionally, or according to any obvious opening for an income, he *was*. Poverty was the badge of all his tribe. Amongst the aristocracy, the instinct of contempt, or at least of slight regard, towards literature was supported by the irrelation of literature to the *state*. Aristocracy itself was the flower and fruitage of the state; a nobility was possible only in the ratio of the grandeur and magnificence developed for *social* results; so that a poor and unpopulous nation cannot create a great aristocracy: the flower and foliation must be in relation to the stem and the radix out of which they germinate. Inevitably, therefore, a nobility so great as the English—that not in pride, but in

the mere logic of its political relations, felt its order to be a sort of heraldic shield, charged with the trophies and ancestral glories of the nation—could not but in its *public* scale of appreciation estimate every profession and rank of men by the mode of their natural connection with the state. Law and arms, for instance, were honoured, not because any capricious precedent had been established of a title to public honour in favour of those professions, but because, through their essential functions, they opened for themselves a permanent necessity of introsusception into the organism of the state. A great law officer, a great military leader, a popular admiral, is already, by virtue of his functions, a noble in men's account, whether you gave or refused him a title; and in such cases it has always been the policy of an aristocratic state to confer, or even impose the title, lest the disjunction of the virtual nobility from the titular should gradually disturb the estimate of the latter. But literature, by its very grandeur, is degraded socially; for its relations are essentially cosmopolitan, or, speaking more strictly, not cosmopolitan, which might mean to all other peoples considered as national states, whereas literature has no relation to any sections or social schisms amongst men—its relations are to the race. In proportion as any literary work rises in its pretensions—for instance, if it works by the highest forms of passion—its *nisus*, its natural effort, is to address the race, and not any individual nation. That it found a bar to this *nisus*, in a limited language, was but an accident: the essential relations of every great intellectual work are to those capacities in man by which he tends to brotherhood, and not to those by which he tends to alienation. Man is ever coming nearer to agreement, ever narrowing his differences, notwithstanding that the interspace may

cost an eternity to traverse. Where the agreement is, not where the difference is, in the centre of man's affinities, not of his repulsions, *there* lies the magnetic centre towards which all poetry that is potent, and all philosophy that is faithful, are eternally travelling by natural tendency. Consequently, if indirectly literature may hold a patriotic value as a gay plumage in the cap of a nation, directly, and by a far deeper tendency, literature is essentially alien. A poet, a book, a system of religion, belongs to that nation best qualified for appreciating their powers, and not to the nation which, perhaps by accident, gave them birth. How, then, is it wonderful that an intense organ of the social principle in a nation—viz., a nobility—should fail, in their professional character, to rate highly, or even to recognise, as having any proper existence, a fine art which is by tendency anti-social (anti-social in this sense, that what it seeks, it seeks by transcending all social barriers and separations)? Yet it is remarkable that in England, where the aristocracy for three centuries (sixteenth, seventeenth, eighteenth) paid so little honour, in their public or corporate capacity, to literature, privately they honoured it with a rare courtesy. That same grandee, who would have looked upon Camden, Ben Jonson, Selden, or Hobbes, as an audacious intruder, if occupying any prominent station at a state festival, would have received him with a kind of filial reverence in his own mansion; for in this place, as having no national reference, as sacred to hospitality, which regards the human tie, and not the civic tie, this grandee would be at liberty to regard the man of letters in his cosmopolitan character. And on the same instinct, a prince in the very meanest state would, in a state-pageant commemorating the national honours, assign a distinguished place to the national high admiral, though he were the most stupid of men, and

would utterly neglect the stranger Columbus. But in his own palace, and at his own table, he would perhaps invert this order of precedency, and would place Columbus at his own right hand.

Some such principle, as is here explained, did certainly prevail in the practice (whether consciously perceived or not in the philosophy) of that England which extended through the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. First in the eighteenth century all honour to literature, under *any* relation, began to give way. And why? Because expanding politics, expanding partisanship, and expanding journalism, then first called into the field of literature an inferior class of labourers. Then first it was that, from the noblest of professions, literature became a trade. Literature it was that gave the first wound to literature; the hack scribbler it was that first degraded the lofty literary artist. For a century and a-half we have lived under the shade of this fatal revolution. But, however painful such a state of things may be to the keen sensibilities of men pursuing the finest of vocations — carrying forward as inheritors from past generations the eternal chase after truth, and power, and beauty—still we must hold that the dishonour to literature has issued from internal sources proper to herself, and not from without. The nobility of England have, for three and a-half centuries, personally practised literature as an elevated accomplishment; our royal and noble authors are numerous, and they would have continued the same cordial attentions to the literary body, had that body maintained the same honourable composition. But a *litterateur*, simply *as* such, it is no longer safe to distinguish with favour. Once, but not now, he was liable to no misjudgment. Once he was pretty sure either to be a man of some genius, or, at the least, of

unusual scholarship. Now, on the contrary, a mob of traitors have mingled with the true men; and the loyal perish with the disloyal, because it is impossible, in a mob so vast and fluctuating, for the artillery of avenging scorn to select its victims

All this, bitter in itself, has become *more* bitter from the contrast furnished by France. We know that literature has long been misappreciated amongst ourselves. In France it has long been otherwise appreciated—more advantageously appreciated. And we infer that therefore it is in France more wisely appreciated. But this does not follow. I have ever been of opinion that the valuation of literature in France, or at least of current literature, and as it shows itself in the treatment of literary men, is unsound, extravagant, and that it rests upon a basis originally false. Simply to have been the translator from the English of some prose book, a history or a memoir, neither requiring nor admitting any display of mastery over the resources of the language, conferred, throughout the eighteenth century, so advantageous a position in Parisian society upon one whom we English should view as a mere mechanic drudge, that we really had a right to expect the laws of France and the court ceremonies to reflect this feature of public manners. Naturally, for instance, any man honoured so preposterously ought in law to have enjoyed the *jus trium liberorum*, and perpetual immunity from taxes. Or again, as regards ceremonial honours, on any fair scale of proportions, it was reasonable to expect that to any man who had gone into a fourth edition the royal sentinels should present arms; that to the author of a successful tragedy the guard should everywhere turn out; and that an epic poet, if ever such a difficult birth should make its epiphany in Paris,

must look to have his approach towards a *soirée* announced by a salvo of a hundred-and-one guns.

My space will not allow me to go into the illustrative details of this monstrous anomaly in French society. I confine myself to its cause, as sufficiently explaining why it is that no imitation of such absurdities can or ought to prosper in England. The same state of things, under a different modification, takes place in Germany; and from the very same cause. Is it not monstrous, or *was* it not until within recent days, to find every German city drawing the pedantic materials, and the pedantic interest of its staple conversation, from the systems and the conflicts of a few rival academic professors? Generally these paramount lords of German conversation, that swayed its movements this way or that, as a lively breeze sways a corn-field, were metaphysicians: Fichte, for instance, and Hegel. These were the arid sands that bibulously absorbed all the perennial gushings of German enthusiasm. France of the last century and the modern Germany were, as to this point, on the same level of foolishness. But France had greatly the advantage in point of liberality. For general literature furnishes topics a thousand times more graceful and fitted to blend with social pleasure, than the sapless problems of ontological systems, meant only for scholastic use.

But what, then, was the cause of this social deformity? Why was literature allowed eventually to disfigure itself, by disturbing the natural currents of conversation, to make itself odious by usurpation, and thus virtually to operate as a mode of pedantry? It was because in neither land had the people any power of political discussion. It was because every question growing out of religion, or connecting itself with laws, with government, with governors,

with political interests or political machineries, or with judicial courts, was an interdicted theme. The mind sought in despair for some free area wide enough to allow of boundless openings for individualities of sentiment—human enough to sustain the interests of *social* discussion. That free area was found only in books. In Paris to talk of politics was to talk of the king; *l'état c'est moi;* to talk of the king in any spirit of discussion, to talk of that *Jupiter optimus maximus,* from whom all fountains flowed of good and evil things, before whom stood the two golden urns, one filled with *lettres de cachet,* the other with crosses, pensions, offices—what was it but to dance on the margin of a volcano, or to swim cotillons in the suction of a maelstrom? Hence it was that literature became the only safe colloquial subject of a general nature in old France; hence it was that literature furnished the only "open questions;" and hence it *is* that the mode and the expression of honour to literature in France has continued to this hour tainted with false and histrionic feeling, because originally it grew up from spurious roots, prospered unnaturally upon deep abuses in the social system, and at this day (so far as it still lingers) memorialises the political bondage of the nation. Cleanse, therefore—should be our general prayer—cleanse, O unknown Hercules, this Augean stable of our English current literature, rich in dunghills, rich therefore in precipitate mushroom and fraudulent fungus, yet rich also (if we may utter our real thoughts)—rich pre-eminently at this hour in seed-plots of immortal growths, and in secret vegetations of volcanic strength;—cleanse it (O coming man!), but not by turning through it any river of political Lethe, such as for two centuries swept over the literature of France. Purifying waters were these in one sense: they banished the accumu-

lated depositions of barbarism; they banished Gothic tastes; but they did all this by laying asleep the nobler activities of a great people, and reconciling them to forgetfulness of whatsoever commanded them as duties, or whispered to them as rights.

If, therefore, the false homage of France towards literature still survives, it is no object for imitation amongst *us;* since it arose upon a vicious element in the social composition of that people. Partially it *does* survive, as we all know by the experience of the last thirty years, during which authors, and *as* authors (not, like Mirabeau or Talleyrand, in spite of authorship), have been transferred from libraries to senates and privy councils. This has done no service to literature, but, on the contrary, has degraded it, by seducing the children of literature from their proper ambition. It is the glory of literature to rise, as if on wings, into an atmosphere nobler than that of political intrigue. And the whole result to French literature has been, that some ten or twelve of the leading literati have been tempted away by bribes from their appropriate functions, while some five thousand have been made envious and discontented.

At this point, when warned suddenly that the hour-glass is running out, which measures my residuum of flying minutes, I first perceive, on looking round, that I have actually been skirmishing with Mr Forster from the beginning of my paper to this very line; and have thus left to myself but a corner for the main purpose of expressing emphatically public thanks to him for this successful labour of love in restoring a half-subverted statue to its upright position. I am satisfied that many thousands of readers will utter the same thanks to him, with the same sincerity. Admiration for the versatile ability with which he has

pursued his object is swallowed up for the moment in gratitude for his perfect success. It might have been imagined, that Goldsmith's exquisite truth of household pathos, and of humour, with happy graces of style, plastic as the air or the surface of a lake to the pure impulses of nature, sweeping them by the motions of her eternal breath, were qualities authorised to justify themselves before the hearts of men, in defiance of all which affected scorn or the condescension of masquerading envy could effect for their disturbance. And so they are: and left to plead for themselves at such a bar as unbiassed human hearts, they could not have their natural influences intercepted. But, in the case of Goldsmith, literary traditions have *not* left these qualities to their natural influence. It is a fact, that up to this hour the contemporary falsehoods at Goldsmith's expense, and (worse perhaps than those falsehoods) the malicious interpretations of incidents partly true, having wings lent to them by the buoyant and amusing gossip of Boswell, continue to obstruct the full ratification of Goldsmith's pretensions. To this hour, the scorn from many of his own age runs side by side with a misgiving sense of his real native power. A feeling still survives, originally derived from his own age, that the "inspired idiot," wherever he succeeded, ought *not* to have succeeded—having owed his success to accident, or even to some inexplicable perverseness in running counter to his own nature. It was by shooting awry that he had hit the mark; and, when most he came near to the bull's-eye, most of all "by rights" he ought to have missed it. He had blundered into the "Traveller," into "Mr Croaker," into "Tony Lumkin;" and not satisfied with such dreadful blunders as these, he had consummated his guilt by blundering into the "Vicar of Wakefield," and the "Deserted Village;"

atrocities over which, in effect, we are requested to drop the veil of human charity; since the more gem-like we may choose to think these works, the more unnatural, audacious, and indeed treasonable, it was in an *idiot* (as Dr Johnson styled him) to produce them.

In this condition of Goldsmith's traditionary character, so injuriously disturbing to the natural effect of his inimitable works (for in its own class each of his best works *is* inimitable), Mr Forster steps forward with a threefold exposure of the falsehood inherent in the anecdotes upon which this traditional character has arisen. Some of these anecdotes he challenges as *literally* false; others as virtually so; they are true, perhaps, but under such a version of their circumstances as would altogether take out the sting of their offensive interpretation. For others again, and this is a profounder service, he furnishes a most just and philosophic explanation, that brings them at once within the reader's toleration, nay, sometimes within a deep reaction of pity. As a case, for instance, of downright falsehood, we may cite the well-known story told by Boswell—that, when Goldsmith travelled in France with some beautiful young Englishwomen (meaning the Miss Hornecks), he was seriously uneasy at the attentions which they received from the gallantry of Frenchmen, as intruding upon his own claims. Now this story, in logical phrase, proves too much. For the man who *could* have expressed such feelings, in such a situation, must have been ripe for Bedlam. Coleridge mentions a man who entertained so exalted an opinion of himself, and of his own right to apotheosis, that he never uttered that great pronoun "*I*," without solemnly taking off his hat. Even to the oblique case "*me*," which no compositor ever honours with a capital *M*, and to the possessive pronoun

my and *mine*, he held it a duty to bend reverentially. Yet even this bedlamite would not have been a competitor with a lady for the attentions paid to her in right of her sex. In Goldsmith's case, the whole allegation was dissipated in the most decisive way. Some years after Goldsmith's death, one of the sisters personally concerned in the case was unaffectedly shocked at the printed story when coming to her knowledge, as a gross calumny; her sorrow made it evident that the whole had been a malicious distortion of some light-hearted gaiety uttered by Goldsmith. There is little doubt that the story of the bloom-coloured coat, and of the puppet-show, rose on a similar basis—the calumnious perversion of a jest.

But in other cases, where there really *may* have been some fretful expression of self-esteem, Mr Forster's explanation transfers the foible to a truer and a more pathetic station. Goldsmith's own precipitancy, his overmastering defect in proper reserve, in self-control, and in presence of mind, falling in with the habitual undervaluation of many amongst his associates, placed him at a great disadvantage in animated conversation. His very truthfulness, his simplicity, his frankness, his hurry of feeling, all told against him. They betrayed him into inconsiderate expressions that lent a colour of plausibility to the malicious ridicule of those who disliked him the more, from being compelled, after all, to respect him. His own understanding oftentimes sided with his disparagers. He *saw* that he had been in the wrong; whilst secretly he *felt* that his meaning —if properly explained—had been right. Defrauded in this way, and by his own co-operation, of distinctions that naturally belonged to him, he was driven unconsciously to attempt some restoration of the balance, by claiming for a moment distinctions to which he had no real preten-

sions. The whole was a trick of sorrow, and of sorrowing perplexity; he felt that no justice had been done to him, and that he himself had made an opening for the wrong; the result he saw, but the process he could not disentangle; and, in the confusion of his distress, natural irritation threw him upon blind efforts to recover his ground by unfounded claims, when claims so well founded had been maliciously disallowed.

But a day of accounting comes at last—a day of rehearing for the cause, and of revision for the judgment. The longer this review has been delayed, the more impressive it becomes in the changes which it works. Welcome is the spectacle when, after three-fourths of a century have passed away, a writer like Mr Forster—qualified for such a task by ample knowledge of things and persons, by great powers for a comprehensive estimate of the case, and for a splendid exposition of its results, with deep sensibility to the merits of the man chiefly concerned in the issue, enthusiastic, but without partisanship—comes forward to unsettle false verdicts, to recombine misarranged circumstances, and to explain anew misinterpreted facts. Such a man wields the authority of heraldic marshals. Like the Otho of the Roman theatre, he has power to raise or to degrade—to give or to take away precedency; but, like this Otho, he has so much power, because he exercises it on known principles, and without caprice. To the man of true genius, like Goldsmith, when seating himself in humility on the lowest bench, he says, "Go thou up to a higher place. Seat thyself above those proud men, that once trampled thee in the dust. Be thy memorial upon earth, not (as of some who scorned thee) 'the whistling of a name:'—be thou remembered amongst men by tears of tenderness, by happy laughter untainted with malice, and

by the benedictions of those that, reverencing man's nature, see gladly its frailties brought within the gracious smile of human charity, and its nobilities levelled to the apprehension of simplicity and innocence."

Over every grave, even though tenanted by guilt and shame, the human heart, when circumstantially made acquainted with its silent records of suffering or temptation, yearns in love or in forgiveness to breathe a solemn *Requiescat!* how much more, then, over the grave of a benefactor to the human race! But it is a natural feeling, with respect to such a prayer, that, however fervent and sincere, it has no perfect faith in its own validity, so long as any unsettled feud from ancient calumny hangs over the buried person. The unredressed wrong seems to haunt the sepulchre in the shape of a perpetual disturbance to its rest. First of all, when this wrong has been adjudicated and expiated, is the *Requiescat* uttered with a perfect faith in itself. By a natural confusion we then transfer our own feelings to the occupant of the grave. The tranquillisation to our own wounded sense of justice seems like an atonement to *his:* the peace for *us* transforms itself under a fiction of tenderness into a peace for *him:* the reconciliation between the world that did the wrong and the grave that seemed to suffer it, is accomplished; the reconciler, in such a case, whoever he may be, seems a double benefactor—to *him* that endured the injury—to *us* that resented it; and in the particular case now before the public, we shall all be ready to agree that this reconciling friend, who might have entitled his work *Vindiciæ Oliverianæ,* has, by the piety of his service to a man of exquisite genius, so long and so foully misrepresented, earned a right to interweave for ever his own cipher and cognisance in filial union with those of OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

ON WORDSWORTH'S POETRY.

HERETOFORE, upon one impulse or another, I have retraced fugitive memorials of several persons celebrated in our own times; but I have never undertaken an examination of any man's writings. The one labour is, comparatively, without an effort; the other is both difficult, and, with regard to contemporaries, is invidious. In genial moments the characteristic remembrances of men expand as fluently as buds travel into blossoms; but criticism, if it is to be conscientious and profound, and if it is applied to an object so unlimited as poetry, must be almost as unattainable by any hasty effort as fine poetry itself. "Thou hast convinced me," says Rasselas to Imlac, "that it is impossible to be a poet;" so vast had appeared to be the array of qualifications. But, with the same ease, Imlac might have convinced the prince that it was impossible to be a critic. And hence it is, that, in the sense of absolute and philosophic criticism, we have little or none; for, before *that* can exist, we must have a good psychology; whereas, at present, we have none at all.

If, however, it is more difficult to write critical sketches than sketches of personal recollections, often it is much less connected with painful scruples. Of books, so long

as you rest only on grounds which, in sincerity, you believe to be true, and speak without anger or scorn, you can hardly say the thing which *ought* to be taken amiss. But of men and women you dare not, and must not, tell all that chance may have revealed to you. Sometimes you are summoned to silence by pity for that general human infirmity, which you also, the writer, share. Sometimes you are checked by the consideration, that perhaps your knowledge of the case was originally gained under opportunities allowed only by confidence, or by unsuspecting carelessness. Sometimes the disclosure would cause quarrels between parties now at peace. Sometimes it would inflict pain, such as you could not feel any right to inflict, upon people not directly but collaterally interested in the exposure. Sometimes, again, if right to be told, it might be difficult to prove. Thus, for one cause or another, some things are sacred, and some things are perilous, amongst any *personal* revelations that else you might have it in your power to make. And seldom, indeed, is your own silent retrospect of close personal connections with distinguished men altogether happy. "Put not your trust in princes, nor in the sons of princes"—this has been the warning—this has been the farewell moral, winding up and pointing the experience of dying statesmen. Not less truly it might be said—"Put not your trust in the intellectual princes of your age;" form no connections too close with any who live only in the atmosphere of admiration and praise. The love or the friendship of such people rarely contracts itself into the narrow circle of individuals. You, if you are brilliant like themselves, or in any degree standing upon intellectual pretensions, such men will hate; you, if you are dull, they will despise. Gaze, therefore, on the splendour of such idols

as a passing stranger. Look for a moment as one sharing in the idolatry; but pass on before the splendour has been sullied by human frailty, or before your own generous admiration has been confounded with offerings of weeds, or with the homage of the sycophantic.

Safer, then, it is to scrutinise the works of eminent poets, than long to connect yourself with themselves, or to revive your remembrances of them in any personal record. Now, amongst all works that have illustrated our own age, none can more deserve an earnest notice than those of the Laureate;* and on some grounds, peculiar to themselves, none so much. Their merit in fact is not only supreme, but unique; not only supreme in their general class, but unique as in a class of their own. And there is a challenge of a separate nature to the curiosity of the readers, in the remarkable contrast between the first stage of Wordsworth's acceptation with the public, and that which he enjoys at present. One original obstacle to the favourable impression of the Wordsworthian poetry, and an obstacle purely self-created, was his theory of poetic diction. The diction itself, without the theory, was of less consequence; for the mass of readers would have been too blind or too careless to notice it. But the preface to the second edition of his Poems (2 vols. 1799–1800) compelled all readers to notice it. Nothing more injudicious was ever done by man. An unpopular truth would, at any rate, have been a bad inauguration for what, on *other* accounts, the author had announced as "an experiment." His poetry was already, and confessedly, an experiment as regarded the quality of the subjects selected, and as regarded the mode of treating them. That was surely trial enough for the reader's untrained sensi-

* William Wordsworth had, on the death of Southey, accepted the Laureateship.

bilities, without the unpopular novelty besides as to the quality of the diction. But, in the meantime, this novelty, besides being unpopular, was also in part false; it was true, and it was *not* true. And it was not true in a double way. Stating broadly, and allowing it to be taken for his meaning, that the diction of ordinary life (in his own words, "the very language of men") was the proper diction for poetry, the writer meant no such thing; for only a *part* of this diction, according to his own subsequent restriction, was available for such a use. And, secondly, as his own subsequent practice showed, even this part was available only for peculiar classes of poetry. In his own exquisite "Laodamia," in his "Sonnets," in his "Excursion," few are his obligations to the idiomatic language of life, as distinguished from that of books, or of prescriptive usage. Coleridge remarked, justly, that the "Excursion" bristles beyond most poems with what are called "dictionary" words; that is, polysyllabic words of Latin or Greek origin. And so it must ever be, in meditative poetry upon solemn philosophic themes. The gamut of ideas needs a corresponding gamut of expressions; the scale of the thinking, which ranges through *every* key, exacts, for the artist, an unlimited command over the entire scale of the instrument which he employs. Never, in fact, was there a more erroneous direction—one falser in its grounds, or more ruinous in its tendency—than that given by a modern rector* of the Glasgow University to the students—viz., that they should cultivate the Saxon part of our language rather than the Latin part. Nonsense. Both are indispensable; and, speaking generally, without stopping to distinguish as to subjects, both are *equally* in-

* "*Modern rector:*"—viz., Lord Brougham.

dispensable. Pathos, in situations which are homely, or at all connected with domestic affections, naturally moves by Saxon words. Lyrical emotion of every kind, which (to merit the name of *lyrical)* must be in the state of flux and reflux, or, generally, of agitation, also requires the Saxon element of our language. And why? Because the Saxon is the aboriginal element; the basis, and not the superstructure; consequently it comprehends all the ideas which are natural to the heart of man, and to the *elementary* situations of life. And, although the Latin often furnishes us with duplicates of these ideas, yet the Saxon, or monosyllabic part, has the advantage of precedency in our use and knowledge; for it is the language of the NURSERY, whether for rich or poor, in which great philological academy no toleration is given to words in "*osity*" or "*ation.*" There is, therefore, a great advantage, as regards the consecration to our feelings, settled, by usage and custom, upon the Saxon strands, in the mixed yarn of our native tongue. And, universally, this may be remarked—that, wherever the passion of a poem is of that sort which *uses, presumes,* or *postulates* the ideas, without seeking to extend them, Saxon will be the "cocoon" (to speak by the language applied to silk-worms) which the poem spins for itself. But, on the other hand, where the motion of the feeling is *by* and *through* the ideas, where (as in religious or meditative poetry—Young's, for instance, or Cowper's) the sentiment creeps and kindles underneath the very tissues of the thinking, there the Latin will predominate; and so much so, that, whilst the flesh, the blood, and the muscle, will be often almost exclusively Latin, the articulations or hinges of connection and transition will be Anglo-Saxon.

But a blunder, more perhaps from thoughtlessness and careless reading, than from malice, on the part of the pro-

fessional critics, ought to have roused Wordsworth into a firmer feeling of the entire question. These critics had fancied that, in Wordsworth's estimate, whatsoever was plebeian was also poetically just in diction; not as though the impassioned phrase were sometimes the vernacular phrase, but as though the vernacular phrase were universally the impassioned. They naturally went on to suggest, as a corollary, which Wordsworth (as they fancied) could not refuse, that Dryden and Pope must be translated into the flash diction of prisons and the slang of streets, before they could be regarded as poetically costumed. Now, so far as these critics were concerned, the answer would have been—simply to say, that much in the poets mentioned, but especially of the racy Dryden, actually *is* in that vernacular diction for which Wordsworth contended; and, for the other part, which is *not*, frequently it *does* require the very purgation (if *that* were possible), which the critics were presuming to be so absurd. In Pope, and sometimes in Dryden, there is much of the unfeeling and the prescriptive diction which Wordsworth denounced. During the eighty years between 1660 and 1740, grew up that scrofulous taint in our diction, which was denounced by Wordsworth, as technically received for "poetic language;" and, if Dryden and Pope were less infected than others, this was merely because their understandings were finer. Much there is in both poets, as regards diction, which *does* require correction; and correction of the kind presumed by the Wordsworth theory. And if, *so* far, the critics should resist Wordsworth's principle of reform, not he, but they would have been found the patrons of deformity. This course would soon have turned the tables upon the critics. For the poets, or the class of poets, whom they unwisely selected as models, susceptible of no correction, happen to

be those who chiefly require it. But *their* foolish selection ought not to have intercepted or clouded the true question when put in another shape, since in this shape it opens into a very troublesome dilemma. Spenser, Shakspere, the Bible of 1610, and Milton—how say you, William Wordsworth—are these sound and true as to diction, or are they not? If you say they *are*, then what is it that you are proposing to change? What room for a revolution? Would you, as Sancho says, have "better bread than is made of wheat?" But if you say *No*, they are *not* sound, then, indeed, you open a fearful range to your own artillery, but in a war greater than you could, by possibility, have contemplated. In the first case, that is, if the leading classics of the English literature are, in quality of diction and style, loyal to the canons of sound taste, then you cut away the *locus standi* for yourself as a reformer: the reformation applies only to secondary and recent abuses. In the second case, if they also are faulty, you undertake an *onus* of hostility so vast that you will be found fighting against the stars.

It is clear, therefore, that Wordsworth thus far erred, and caused needless embarrassment, equally to the attack and to the defence, by not assigning the names of the parties offending, whom he had specially contemplated. The bodies of the criminals should have been had into court. But much more he erred in another point, where his neglect cannot be thought of without astonishment. The whole appeal turned upon a comparison between two modes of phraseology; each of which, the bad and the good, should have been extensively illustrated; and, until that were done, the whole dispute was an aerial subtlety, equally beyond the grasp of the best critic and the worst. How *could* a man so much in earnest, and so deeply inte-

rested in the question, commit so capital an oversight? *Tantamne rem tam negligenter?* (What! treat a matter so weighty in a style so slight and slipshod?) The truth is, that, at this day, after a lapse of forty-seven years, and much discussion, the whole question moved by Wordsworth is still a *res integra* (a case untouched). And for this reason, that no sufficient specimen has ever been given of the particular phraseology which each party contemplates as good or as bad; no man, in this dispute, steadily understands even himself; and, if he did, no other person understands him, for want of distinct illustrations. Not only the answer, therefore, is still entirely in arrear, but even the question is still in arrear: it has not yet practically explained itself so as that an answer to it could be possible.

Passing from the diction of Wordsworth's poetry to its matter, the least plausible objection ever brought against it was that of Mr Hazlitt: "One would suppose," he said, "from the tenor of his subjects, that on this earth there was neither marrying nor giving in marriage." But as well might it be said of Aristophanes: "One would suppose that in Athens no such thing had been known as sorrow and weeping." Or Wordsworth himself might say reproachfully to some of Mr Hazlitt's more favoured poets: "Judging by *your* themes, a man must believe that there is no such thing on our planet as fighting and kicking." Wordsworth has written many memorable poems (for instance, "On the Tyrolean and the Spanish Insurrections," "On the Retreat from Moscow," "On the Feast of Brougham Castle"), all sympathising powerfully with the martial spirit. Other poets, favourites of Mr Hazlitt, have never struck a solitary note from this Tyrtæan lyre; and who blames them? Surely, if every man breathing finds his

powers limited, every man would do well to respect this silent admonition of nature, by not travelling out of his appointed walk, through any coxcombry of sporting a spurious versatility. And in this view, what Mr Hazlitt made the reproach of the poet, is amongst the first of his praises. But there is another reason why Wordsworth could not meddle with festal raptures like the glory of a wedding-day. These raptures are not only too brief, but (which is worse) they tend downwards: even for as long as they last, they do not move upon an ascending scale. And even *that* is not their worst fault: they do not diffuse or communicate themselves: the wretches chiefly interested in a marriage are so selfish, that they keep all the rapture to themselves. Mere joy, that does not linger and reproduce itself in reverberations and endless mirrors, is not fitted for poetry. What would the sun be itself, if it were a mere blank orb of fire that did not multiply its splendours through millions of rays refracted and reflected; or if its glory were not endlessly caught, splintered, and thrown back by atmospheric repercussions?

There is, besides, a still subtler reason (and one that ought not to have escaped the acuteness of Mr Hazlitt) why the muse of Wordsworth could not glorify a wedding festival. Poems no longer than a sonnet he *might* derive from such an impulse: and one such poem of his there really is. But whosoever looks searchingly into the characteristic genius of Wordsworth, will see that he does not willingly deal with a passion in its direct aspect, or presenting an unmodified contour, but in forms more complex and oblique, and when passing under the shadow of some secondary passion. Joy, for instance, that wells up from constitutional sources, joy that is ebullient from youth to age, and cannot cease to sparkle, he yet exhibits

in the person of Matthew,* the village schoolmaster, as touched and overgloomed by memories of sorrow. In the poem of "We are Seven," which brings into day for the first time a profound fact in the abysses of human nature —viz., that the mind of an infant cannot admit the idea of death, cannot comprehend it, any more than the fountain of light can comprehend the aboriginal darkness (a truth on which Mr Ferrier has since commented beautifully in his "Philosophy of Consciousness")—the little mountaineer, who furnishes the text for this lovely strain, she whose fulness of life could not brook the gloomy faith in a grave, is yet (for the effect upon the reader) brought into connection with the reflex shadows of the grave: and if she herself has *not*, the reader *has*, and through this very child, the gloom of that contemplation obliquely irradiated, as raised in relief upon his imagination, even by *her*. That same infant, which subjectively could not tolerate death, being by the reader contemplated objectively, flashes upon us the tenderest images of death. Death and its sunny antipole are forced into connection. I remember, again, to have heard a man complain, that in a little poem of Wordsworth's, having for its very subject the universal diffusion (and the gratuitous diffusion) of joy—

> "Pleasure is spread through the earth,
> In stray gifts to be claim'd by whoever shall find,"

a picture occurs which overpowered him with melancholy: it was this—

> "In sight of the spires
> All alive with the fires
> Of the sun going down to his rest,
> In the broad open eye of the solitary sky

* See the exquisite poems, so little understood by the commonplace reader, of the "Two April Mornings," and the "Fountain."

> They dance—there are three, as jocund as free,
> While they dance on the calm river's breast." *

Undeniably there is (and without ground for complaint there is) even here, where the spirit of gaiety is professedly invoked, an oblique though evanescent image flashed upon us of a sadness that lies deep behind the laughing figures, and of a solitude that is the real possessor in fee of all things, but is waiting an hour or so for the dispossession of the dancing men and maidens who for that transitory hour are the true, but, alas! the fugitive tenants.

An inverse case, as regards the three just cited, is found in the poem of "Hart-leap-well," over which the mysterious spirit of the noonday Pan seems to brood. Out of suffering there is evoked the image of peace. Out of the cruel leap, and the agonising race through thirteen hours—out of the anguish in the perishing brute, and the headlong courage of his final despair,

> "Not unobserved by sympathy divine"—

out of the ruined lodge and the forgotten mansion, bowers that are trodden under foot, and pleasure-houses that are dust—the poet calls up a vision of *palingenesis* (or restorative resurrection); he interposes his solemn images of suffering, of decay, and ruin, only as a visionary haze through which gleams transpire of a trembling dawn far off, but surely even now on the road.

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* Coleridge had a grievous infirmity of mind as regarded pain. He could not contemplate the shadows of fear, of sorrow, of suffering, with any steadiness of gaze. He was, in relation to that subject, what in Lancashire they call *nesh*—*i. e.*, soft, or effeminate. This frailty claimed indulgence, had he not erected it at times into a ground of superiority. Accordingly, I remember that he also complained of this passage in Wordsworth, and on the same ground, as being too overpoweringly depressing in the fourth line, when modified by the other five.

"The pleasure-house is dust: behind, before,
This is no common waste, no common gloom;
But Nature in due course of time once more
Shall here put on her beauty and her bloom.
She leaves these objects to a slow decay,
That what we are, and have been, may be known;
But, at the coming of the milder day,
These monuments shall all be overgrown."

This influx of the joyous into the sad, and of the sad into the joyous—this reciprocal entanglement of darkness in light, and of light in darkness—offers a subject too occult for popular criticism; but merely to have suggested it, may be sufficient to account for Wordsworth not having chosen a theme of pure garish sunshine, such as the hurry of a wedding-day, so long as others, more picturesque or more plastic to a subtle purpose of creation, were to be had. A wedding-day is, in many a life, the sunniest of its days. But, unless it is overcast with some event more tragic than could be wished, its uniformity of blaze, without shade or relief, makes it insipid to the mere bystander. It must not be forgotten, that a wedding is pre-eminently that sort of festival which swamps all individuality of sentiment or character. The *epithalamia* of Edmund Spenser are the most impassioned that exist; but nobody reads them.

But far beyond these causes of repulsiveness to ordinary readers was the class of subjects selected, and the mode of treating them. The earliest line of readers, the van in point of time, always includes a majority of the young, the commonplace, and the unimpassioned. Subsequently these are sifted and winnowed, as the rear-ranks come forward in succession. But at first it was sure to ruin any poems, if the situations treated are not those which reproduce to the fancy of readers their own hopes and prospects. The meditative are interested by all that has an interest for human nature; but what cares a young

lady, dreaming of lovers kneeling at her feet, for the agitations of a mother forced into resigning her child? or for the sorrow of a shepherd at eighty parting for ever amongst mountain solitudes with an only son of seventeen, innocent and hopeful, whom soon afterwards the guilty town seduces into ruin irreparable? Romances and novels in verse constitute the poetry which is *immediately* successful; and that is a poetry, it may be added, which, being successful through one generation, afterwards is unsuccessful for ever.

But from this theme, as too extensive, let us pass to the separate works of Wordsworth; and, in deference to the opinion of the world, let us begin with the "Excursion." This poem, as regards its opening, seems to require a recast. The inaugurating story of Margaret is in a wrong key, and rests upon a false basis. It is a case of sorrow from desertion. So at least it is represented. Margaret loses, in losing her husband (parted from her by mere stress of poverty), the one sole friend of her heart. And the Wanderer, who is the presiding philosopher of the poem, in retracing her story, sees nothing in the case but a wasting away through sorrow, natural in its kind, but preternatural in its degree.

There is a story somewhere told of a man who complained, and his friends also complained, that his face looked almost always dirty. The man explained this strange affection out of a mysterious idiosyncrasy in the face itself, upon which the atmosphere so acted as to force out stains or masses of gloomy suffusion, just as it does upon some qualities of stone in rainy or vapoury weather. But, said his friend, had you no advice for this strange affection? Oh yes: surgeons had prescribed; chemistry had exhausted its secrets upon the case; magnetism had

done its best; electricity had done its worst. His friend mused for some time, and then asked—"Pray, amongst these painful experiments, did it ever happen to you to try one that I have read of—viz., a basin of soap and water?" And perhaps, on the same principle, it might be allowable to ask the philosophic wanderer, who washes the case of Margaret with so many coats of metaphysical varnish, but ends with finding all unavailing, "Pray, amongst your other experiments, did you ever try the effect of a guinea?" Supposing this, however, to be a remedy beyond his fortitude, at least he might have offered a little rational advice, which costs no more than civility. Let us look steadily at the case. The particular calamity under which Margaret groaned was the loss of her husband, who had enlisted—not into the horse marines, too unsettled in their head-quarters, but into our British army. There is something, even on the husband's part, in this enlistment to which the reader can hardly extend his indulgence. The man had not gone off, it is true, as a heartless deserter of his family, or in profligate quest of pleasure. Cheerfully he would have staid and worked, had trade been good; but, as it was *not*, he found it impossible to support the spectacle of domestic suffering. He takes the bounty of a recruiting serjeant, and off he marches with his regiment. Nobody reaches the summit of heartlessness at once; and accordingly, in this early stage of his desertion, we are not surprised to find that part (but what part?) of the bounty had been silently conveyed to his wife. So far we are barely not indignant; but as time wears on we become highly so, for no letter does he ever send to his poor forsaken partner, either of tender excuse, or of encouraging prospects. Yet, if *he had* done this, still we must condemn him. Millions have sup-

ported (and supported without praise or knowledge of man) that trial from which he so weakly fled. Even in this, and going no further, he was a voluptuary. Millions have heard and acknowledged, as a secret call from Heaven, the summons, not only to take their own share of household suffering, as a mere sacrifice to the spirit of manliness, but also to stand the far sterner trial of witnessing the same privations in a wife and little children. To evade this, to slip his neck out of the yoke, when God summons a poor man to such a trial, is the worst form of cowardice. And Margaret's husband, by adding to this cowardice subsequently an entire neglect of his family, not so much as intimating the destination of the regiment, forfeits his last hold upon our lingering sympathy. But with *him*, it will be said, the poet has not connected the leading thread of the interest. Certainly not; though in some degree, by a reaction from *his* character, depends the respectability of Margaret's grief. And it is impossible to turn away from *his* case entirely, because from the act of the enlistment is derived the whole movement of the story. Here it is that we must tax the wandering philosopher with treason to his obvious duty. He found so luxurious a pleasure in contemplating a pathetic *phthisis* of heart in the abandoned wife, that the one obvious word of counsel in her particular distress, which dotage could not have overlooked, he suppresses. And yet this one word in the revolution of a week would have brought her effectual relief. Surely the regiment into which her husband had enlisted bore some number: it was the king's "dirty half-hundred,"* or the rifle brigade, or some corps

* "*Dirty half-hundred:*"—By an old military jest, which probably had at first some foundation in fact, the 50th regiment of foot has been so styled for above a century.

known to men and the Horse Guards. Instead, therefore, of suffering poor Margaret to loiter at a gate, looking for answers to her questions from vagrant horsemen, a process which reminds one of a sight, sometimes extorting at once smiles and deep pity, in the crowded thoroughfares of London—viz., a little child innocently asking with tearful eyes from strangers for the mother whom it has lost in that vast wilderness—the Wanderer should at once have inquired for the station of that particular detachment which had enlisted him. This *must* have been in the neighbourhood. Here he would have obtained all the particulars. That same night he might have written to the War-Office; and in a very few days, an official answer, bearing the indorsement, *On H. M.'s Service*, would have placed Margaret in communication with her truant. To have overlooked a point of policy so broadly apparent as this, vitiates and nullifies the very basis of the story. Even for a romance it will not do, far less for a philosophic poem, dealing with intense realities. No such case of distress could have lived for one fortnight; nor could it have survived a single interview with the rector, the curate, or the parish-clerk, with the schoolmaster, the doctor, the attorney, the innkeeper, or the exciseman.

But, apart from the vicious mechanism of the incidents, the story is far more objectionable by the doubtful quality of the leading character from which it derives its pathos. Had any one of us the readers discharged the duties of coroner in her neighbourhood, he would have found it his duty to hold an inquest upon the body of her infant. This child, as every reader could depose (*now* when the case has been circumstantially reported by the poet), died of neglect; not originating in direct cruelty, but in criminal self-indulgence. Self-indulgence in what? Not in liquor,

yet not altogether in fretting. Sloth, and the habit of gadding abroad, were most in fault. The Wanderer* himself might have been called, as a witness for the crown, to prove that the infant was left to sleep in solitude for hours: the key even was taken away, as if to intercept the possibility (except through burglary) of those tender attentions from some casual stranger, which the thoughtless and vagrant mother had withdrawn. The child absolutely awoke whilst the philosopher was listening at the door. It cried; but finally hushed itself to sleep. That looks like a case of Dalby's carminative.† But this solution of the case (the soothing into sleep) could not have been relied on; tragical catastrophes arise from neglected crying; ruptures in the first place, a very common result in infants; rolling out of bed, followed by dislocation of the neck; fits, and other short cuts to death. It is hardly any praise to Margaret that she carried the child to that consummation by a more lingering road.

This first tale, therefore, must, and will, if Mr Wordsworth retains energy for such recasts of a laborious work, be cut away from its connection with the "Excursion." Such an amputation is the more to be expected from a poet aware of his own importance, and anxious for the perfection of his works, because nothing in the following books depends upon this narrative. No timbers or main beams need to be sawed away; it is but a bolt that is to

* "*The Wanderer*" (as should be explained to the reader) is the technical designation of the presiding philosopher in Wordsworth's "Excursion."

† "*Dalby's carminative:*"—This, and another similar remedy, called Godfrey's cordial, both owing their main agencies to opium, have through generations been the chief resource of poor mothers when embarrassed in their daily labours by fretful infants. Fine ladies have no such difficulty to face, and are apt to forget that there is any such apology to plead.

be slipped, a rivet to be unscrewed. And yet, on the other hand, if the connection is slight, the injury is great; for we all complain heavily of entering a temple dedicated to new combinations of truth through a vestibule of falsehood. And the falsehood is double; falsehood in the adjustment of the details (however separately possible), falsehood in the character which, wearing the mask of profound sentiment, does apparently repose upon dyspepsy and sloth.

Far different in value and in principle of composition is the next tale in the "Excursion." This occupies the fourth book, and is the impassioned record from the infidel solitary of those heart-shaking chapters in his own life which had made him what the reader finds him. Once he had not been a solitary; once he had not been an infidel; now he is both. He lives in a little urn-like valley (a closet-recess from Little Langdale, to judge by the description), amongst the homely household of a yeoman; he has become a bitter cynic; and not against man alone, or society alone, but against the laws of hope or fear, upon which both repose. If he endures the society with which he is now connected, it is because, being dull, that society is of few words; it is because, being tied to hard labour, that society goes early to bed, and packs up its dulness at eight P.M. in blankets; it is because, under the acute inflictions of Sunday, or the chronic inflictions of the Christmas holidays, that dull society is easily laid into a magnetic sleep by three passes of metaphysical philosophy. The narrative of this misanthrope is grand and impassioned; not creeping by details and minute touches, but rolling through capital events, and uttering its pathos through great representative abstractions. Nothing can be finer than when, upon the desolation of his household, upon the

utter emptying of his domestic chambers by the successive deaths of children and youthful wife, just at that moment the mighty phantom of the French Revolution rises solemnly above the horizon; even then, even by this great vision, new earth and new heavens are promised to human nature; and suddenly the solitary man, translated by the frenzy of human grief into the frenzy of supernatural hopes, adopts these radiant visions for the darlings whom he has lost—

> "Society becomes his glittering bride,
> And airy hopes his children."

Yet it is a misfortune in the fate of this fine tragic movement, rather than its structure, that it tends to collapse; the latter strains, coloured deeply by disappointment, do not correspond with the grandeur of the first. And the hero of the record becomes even more painfully a contrast to himself than the tenor of the incidents to their own earlier stages. Sneering and querulous comments upon so broad a field as human folly, make poor compensation for the magnificence of youthful enthusiasm. But may not this defect be redressed in a future section of the poem? It is probable, from a hint dropped by the author, that one collateral object of the philosophical discussions is, the reconversion of the splenetic infidel to his ancient creed in some higher form, and to his ancient temper of benignant hope; in which case, what *now* we feel to be a cheerless depression, will sweep round into a noble re-ascent, quite on a level with the aspirations of his youth, and differing, not in degree, but only in quality of enthusiasm. Yet, if this is the poet's plan, it seems to rest upon a misconception. For how should the sneering sceptic, who has actually found solace in Voltaire's "Candide," be restored to the benignities of faith and hope by argument?

It was not in this way that he lost his station amongst Christian believers. No false philosophy it had been which wrecked his Christian spirit of hope; but, in the very inverse order, his bankruptcy in hope it was which wrecked his Christian philosophy. Here, therefore, the poet will certainly find himself in an "almighty fix;" because any possible treatment, which could restore the solitary's former self, such as a course of tonic medicines or sea-bathing, could not interest the reader; and reversely, any successful treatment through argument that could interest the philosophic reader, would not, under the circumstances, seem a plausible restoration commensurate with the case.

What is it that has made the recluse a sceptic? Is it the reading of bad books? In that case he may be reclaimed by the arguments of those who have read better. But not at all. He has become the unbelieving cynic that he is, first, through his own domestic calamities predisposing him to *gloomy* views of human nature; and, secondly, through the overclouding of his high-toned expectations from the French Revolution; which overclouding has disposed him, in a spirit of revenge for his own disappointment, to *contemptuous* views of human nature. Now, surely the dejection which supports his gloom, and the despondency which supports his contempt, are not of a nature to give way before philosophic reasonings. Make him happy by restoring what he has lost, and his genial philosophy will return of itself. Make him triumphant by realising what had seemed to him the golden promises of the French Revolution, and his political creed will moult her sickly feathers. Do this, and he is still young enough for hope; but less than this restoration of his morning visions will not call back again his morning happiness;

and breaking spears with him in logical tournaments will injure his temper without bettering his hopes.

Indirectly, besides, it ought not to be overlooked, that, as respects the French Revolution, the whole college of philosophy in the "Excursion," who are gathered together upon the case of the recluse, make the same mistake that *he* makes. Why is the recluse disgusted with the French Revolution? Because it had not fulfilled many of his expectations; and, of those which it *had* fulfilled, some had soon been darkened by reverses. But really this was childish impatience. If a man depends for the exuberance of his harvest upon the splendour of the coming summer, we do not excuse him for taking prussic acid because it rains cats and dogs through the first ten days of April. All in good time, we say; take it easy; make acquaintance with May and June before you do anything rash. The French Revolution has not, even yet (1845), come into full action. This mighty event was the explosion of a prodigious volcano, which scattered its lava over every kingdom of every continent, silently manuring them for social struggles; this lava is gradually fertilising all soils in all countries; the revolutionary movement is moving onwards at this hour as inexorably as ever. Listen, if you have ears for such spiritual sounds, to the mighty tide even now slowly coming up from the sea to Milan, to Rome, to Naples, to Vienna. Hearken to the ominous undulations already breaking against the steps of that golden throne which stretches from St Petersburg to Astrakan; tremble at the hurricanes which have long been mustering about the pavilions of the Ottoman Padishah. All these are long swells setting in from original impulses and fermentations of the French Revolution. Even as regards France herself, that which gave the mortal offence to the sympathies

of Wordsworth's "Solitary" was the Reign of Terror. But how thoughtless to measure the cycles of vast national revolutions by metres that would not stretch round an ordinary human career. Even to a frail sweetheart, you would grant more indulgence than to be off in a pet because some momentary cloud arose between you. The Reign of Terror was a mere fleeting and transitional phasis. The Napoleon dynasty was nothing more. Even that very Napoleon scourge, which was supposed by many to have consummated and superseded the Revolution, has itself passed away upon the wind—has itself been superseded—leaving no wreck, relic, or record behind, except precisely those changes which it worked, *not in its character of an enemy to the Revolution* (which also it was), *but as its servant and its tool.* See, even whilst we speak, the folly of that cynical sceptic who would not allow time for great natural processes of purification to travel onwards to their birth, or wait for the evolution of natural results; the storm that shocked him has wheeled away; the frost and the hail that offended him have done their office; the rain is over and gone; happier days have descended upon France; the voice of the turtle is heard in all her forests; once again, after two thousand years of serfdom, man walks with his head erect; bastiles are no more; every cottage is searched by the golden light of law; and the privileges of religious conscience have been guaranteed and consecrated for ever and ever.

Here, then, the poet himself, the philosophic Wanderer, the learned vicar, are all equally in fault with the solitary sceptic; for they all agree in treating his disappointment as sound and reasonable in itself; but blameable only in relation to those exalted hopes which he never ought to have encouraged. Right (they say), to consider the French

Revolution, now, as a failure: but *not* right originally to have expected that it should succeed. Whereas, in fact, gentlemen blockheads, it *has* succeeded; it is far beyond the reach of ruinous reactions; it is propagating its life; it is travelling on to new births—conquering, and yet to conquer.

It is not easy to see, therefore, how the Laureate can avoid making some change in the constitution of his poem, were it only to rescue his philosophers, and therefore his own philosophy, from the imputation of precipitancy in judgment. They charge the sceptic with rash judgment *à parte ante;* and, meantime, they themselves are very much more liable to that charge *à parte post.* If he, at the first, hoped too much (which is not clear, but only that he hoped too impatiently), they afterwards recant too rashly. And this error they will not, themselves, fail to acknowledge, as soon as they awaken to the truth, that the French Revolution did not close on the 18th Brumaire, 1799, at which time it suffered eclipse, but not final eclipse; at which time it entered a cloud, but not the cloud of death; at which time its vital movement was arrested by a military traitor, but that this Revolution is still mining under ground, like the ghost in Hamlet, through every quarter of the globe.*

* The reader must not understand the writer as unconditionally approving of the French Revolution. It is his belief that the resistance to the Revolution was, in many high quarters, a sacred duty; and that this resistance it was which forced out, from the Revolution itself, the benefits which it has since diffused. The Revolution, and the resistance to the Revolution, were the two powers that quickened—each the other—for ultimate good. To speak by the language of mechanics, the case was one which illustrated the composition of forces. Neither the Revolution singly, nor the resistance to the Revolution singly, was calculated to regenerate social man. But the two forces in union, where the one modified, mitigated, or even neutralised the other, at times; and where, at

In paying so much attention to the "Excursion" (of which, in any more extended notice, the two books entitled, the "Churchyard amongst the Mountains," would have claimed the profoundest attention), I yield less to my own opinion than to that of the public. Or, perhaps, it is not so much the public as the vulgar opinion, governed entirely by the consideration that the "Excursion" is very much the longest poem of its author; and, secondly, that it bears currently the title of a *philosophic* poem; on which account it is presumed to have a higher dignity. The big name and the big size of the particular volume are allowed to settle its rank. But in this there is much delusion. In the very scheme and movement of the "Excursion" there are two defects which interfere greatly with its power to act upon the mind with any vital effect of unity; so that, infallibly, it will be read, by future generations, in parts and fragments; and, being thus virtually dismembered into many small poems, it will scarcely justify men in allowing it the rank of a long one. One of these defects is the *undulatory* character of the course pursued by the poem, which does not ascend uniformly, or even keep one steady level, but trespasses, as if by forgetfulness or chance, into topics yielding a very humble inspiration, and not always closely connected with the presiding theme. In part this arises from the accident that a slight tissue of narrative connects the different sections; and to this movement of the narrative, the fluctuations of the speculative themes are in part obedient: the succession of the incidents becomes a law for the succession of the thoughts, as oftentimes it happens that these incidents

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times, each entered into a happy combination with the other, yielded for the world those benefits which, by its separate tendency, either of the two had been fitted to stifle.

are the proximate occasions of the thoughts. Yet, as the narrative is not of a nature to be moulded by any determinate principle of controlling passion, but bends easily to the caprices of chance and the moment, unavoidably it stamps, by reaction, a desultory or even incoherent character upon the train of the philosophic discussions. You know not what is coming next as regards the succession of the incidents; and, when the next movement *does* come, you do not always know *why* it comes. This has the effect of crumbling the poem into separate segments, and causes the whole (when looked at *as* a whole) to appear a rope of sand. A second defect lies in the colloquial form which the poem sometimes assumes. It is dangerous to conduct a philosophic discussion by *talking*. If the nature of the argument could be supposed to roll through logical quillets or metaphysical conundrums, so that, on putting forward a problem, the interlocutor could bring matters to a crisis, by saying, "Do you give it up?" in that case there might be a smart reciprocation of dialogue, of asserting and denying, giving and taking, butting, rebutting, and "surrebutting;" and this would confer an interlocutory or *amœbœan* character upon the process of altercation. But the topics and the quality of the arguments being *moral*, in which always the reconciliation of the feelings is to be secured by gradual persuasion, rather than the understanding to be floored by a solitary blow, inevitably it becomes impossible that anything of this brilliant conversational sword-play, cut-and-thrust, "carte" and "tierce," can make for itself an opening. Mere decorum requires that the speakers should be prosy. And you yourself, though sometimes disposed to say, "Do now, dear old soul, cut it short," are sensible that very often he *cannot* cut it short. Disquisitions, in a certain key, can no more turn round

within the compass of a sixpence than a coach-and-six. They must have sea-room to "wear" ship, and to tack. This in itself is often tedious; but it leads to a worse tediousness: a practised eye sees from afar the whole evolution of the coming argument. And this *second* blemish, unavoidable if the method of dialogue is adopted, becomes more painfully apparent through a *third*, almost inalienable from the natural constitution of the subjects concerned. It is, that in cases where a large interest of human nature is treated, such as the position of man in this world, his duties, his difficulties, many parts become necessary as transitional or connecting links, which, *per se*, are not attractive, nor can by any art be made so. Treating the whole theme *in extenso*, the poet is, therefore, driven into discussions that would not have been chosen by his own taste, but dictated by the logic of the question, and by the impossibility of evading any one branch of a subject which is essential to the integrity of the speculation, simply because it is irreconcilable with poetic brilliancy of treatment.

Not, therefore, in the "Excursion" must we look for that reversionary influence which awaits Wordsworth with posterity. It is the vulgar superstition in behalf of big books and sounding pretensions, that must have prevailed upon Coleridge and others to undervalue, by comparison with the direct philosophic poetry of Wordsworth, those earlier poems which are all short, but generally scintillating with gems of far profounder truth. I speak of that truth which strengthens into solemnity an impression very feebly acknowledged previously, or truth which suddenly unveils a connection between objects hitherto regarded as irrelate and independent. In astronomy, to gain the rank of discoverer, it is not required that you should reveal a

star absolutely new: find out with respect to an old star some new affection—as, for instance, that it has an ascertainable parallax—and immediately you bring it within the verge of a human interest; or with respect to some old familiar planet, that its satellites suffer periodical eclipses, and immediately you bring it within the verge of terrestrial uses. Gleams of steadier vision, that brighten into certainty appearances else doubtful, or that unfold relations else unsuspected, are not less discoveries of truth than the downright revelations of the telescope, or the absolute conquests of the diving-bell. It is astonishing how large a harvest of new truths would be reaped, simply through the accident of a man's feeling, or being made to feel, more *deeply* than other men. He sees the same objects, neither more nor fewer, but he sees them engraved in lines far stronger and more determinate: and the difference in the strength makes the whole difference between consciousness and sub-consciousness. And in questions of the mere understanding, we see the same fact illustrated: the author who wins notice the most, is not he that perplexes men by truths drawn from fountains of absolute novelty—truths as yet unsunned, and from that cause obscure; but he that awakens into illuminated consciousness ancient lineaments of truth long slumbering in the mind, although too faint to have extorted attention. Wordsworth has brought many a truth into life both for the eye and for the understanding, which previously had slumbered indistinctly for all men.

For instance, as respects the eye, who does not acknowledge instantaneously the magical strength of truth in his saying of a cataract seen from a station two miles off, that it was "frozen by distance?" In all nature, there is not an object so essentially at war with the stiffening of frost,

as the headlong and desperate life of a cataract; and yet notoriously the effect of distance is to lock up this frenzy of motion into the most petrific column of stillness. This effect is perceived at once when pointed out; but how few are the eyes that ever *would* have perceived it for themselves! Twilight, again—who before Wordsworth ever distinctly noticed its *abstracting* power?—that power of removing, softening, harmonising, by which a mode of obscurity executes for the eye the same mysterious office which the mind so often, within its own shadowy realms, executes for itself. In the dim interspace between day and night, all disappears from our earthly scenery, as if touched by an enchanter's rod, which is either mean or inharmonious, or unquiet, or expressive of temporary things. Leaning against a column of rock, looking down upon a lake or river, and at intervals carrying your eyes forward through a vista of mountains, you become aware that your sight rests upon the very same spectacle, unaltered in a single feature, which once at the same hour was beheld by the legionary Roman from his embattled camp, or by the roving Briton in his "wolf-skin vest," lying down to sleep, and looking

> "Through some leafy bower,
> Before his eyes were closed."

How magnificent is the summary or abstraction of the elementary features in such a scene, as executed by the poet himself, in illustration of this abstraction daily executed by nature, through her handmaid Twilight! Listen, reader, to the closing strain, solemn as twilight is solemn, and grand as the spectacle which it describes:—

> "By him [*i. e.*, the roving Briton] was seen,
> The self-same vision which *we* now behold,
> At thy meek bidding, shadowy Power, brought forth,
> These mighty barriers, and the gulf between;

> The floods, the stars—a spectacle as old
> As the beginning of the heavens and earth."

Another great field there is amongst the pomps of nature, which, if Wordsworth did not first notice, he certainly has noticed most circumstantially. I speak of cloud-scenery, or those pageants of sky-built architecture, which sometimes in summer, at noonday, and in all seasons about sunset, arrest or appal the meditative; "perplexing monarchs" with the spectacle of armies manœuvring, or deepening the solemnity of evening by towering edifices, that mimic—but which also in mimicking mock—the transitory grandeurs of man. It is singular that these gorgeous phenomena, not less than those of the *Aurora Borealis*, have been so little noticed by poets. The *Aurora* was naturally neglected by the southern poets of Greece and Rome, as not much seen in their latitudes.* But the cloud-architecture of the daylight belongs alike to north and south. Accordingly, I remember one notice of it in Hesiod, a case where the clouds exhibited

> "The beauteous semblance of a flock at rest."

Another there is, a thousand years later, in Lucan: amongst the portents which that poet notices as prefiguring the dreadful convulsions destined to shake the earth

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* But then, says the reader, why was it not proportionably the more noticed by poets of the north? Certainly that question is fair. And the answer, it is scarcely possible to doubt, is this:—That until the rise of Natural Philosophy, in Charles II.'s reign, *there was no name* for the appearance; on which account, some writers have been absurd enough to believe that the Aurora did not exist, noticeably, until about 1690. Shakspere, in his journeys down to Stratford (always performed on horseback), must often have been belated: he must sometimes have seen, he could not but have admired, the fiery skirmishing of the Aurora. And yet, for want of a word to fix and identify the gorgeous phenomenon, how could he introduce it as an image, or even as the subject of an allusion, in his writings?

at Pharsalia, I remember some fiery coruscation of arms in the heavens; but, so far as I recollect, the appearances might have belonged equally to the workmanship of the clouds or the Aurora. Up and down the next eight hundred years, are scattered evanescent allusions to these vapoury appearances; in "Hamlet" and elsewhere occur gleams of such allusions; but I remember no distinct sketch of such an appearance before that in the "Antony and Cleopatra" of Shakspere, beginning,

"Sometimes we see a cloud that's dragonish."

Subsequently to Shakspere, these notices, as of all phenomena whatsoever that demanded a familiarity with nature in the spirit of love, became rarer and rarer. At length, as the eighteenth century was winding up its accounts, forth stepped William Wordsworth, of whom, as a reader of all pages in nature, it may be said that, if we except Dampier, the admirable buccaneer, the gentle *flibustier*,* and some few professional naturalists, he first and he last looked at natural objects with the eye that neither will be dazzled from without nor cheated by preconceptions from within. Most men look at nature in the hurry of a confusion that distinguishes nothing; *their* error is from without. Pope, again, and many who live in towns,†

* *Flibustier*, the ordinary French term for a buccaneer in the last forty years of the seventeenth century, is supposed to be a Spanish or French mispronunciation of the English word *freebooter*.

† It was not, however, that all poets then lived in towns; neither had Pope himself generally lived in towns. But it is perfectly useless to be familiar with nature unless there is a public trained to love and value nature. It is not what the individual sees that will fix itself as beautiful in his recollections, but what he sees under a consciousness that others will sympathise with his feelings. Under any other circumstances familiarity does but realise the adage, and "breeds contempt." The great despisers of rural scenery, its fixed and permanent undervaluers, are rustics.

make such blunders as that of supposing the moon to tip with silver the hills *behind* which she is rising, not by erroneous use of their eyes (for they use them not at all), but by inveterate preconceptions. Scarcely has there been a poet with what could be called a learned eye, or an eye *extensively* learned, before Wordsworth. Much affectation there has been of that sort since *his* rise, and at all times much counterfeit enthusiasm; but the sum of the matter is this, that Wordsworth had his passion for nature fixed in his blood; it was a necessity, like that of the mulberry-leaf to the silk-worm; and through his commerce with nature did he live and breathe. Hence it was—viz., from the *truth* of his love—that his knowledge grew; whilst most others, being merely hypocrites in their love, have turned out merely sciolists in their knowledge. This chapter, therefore, of *sky*-scenery may be said to have been revivified amongst the resources of poetry by Wordsworth—rekindled, if not absolutely kindled. The sublime scene indorsed upon the draperies of the storm in the fourth book of the "Excursion"—that scene again witnessed upon the passage of the Hamilton Hills in Yorkshire—the solemn "sky prospect" from the fields of France, are unrivalled in that order of composition; and in one of these records Wordsworth has given first of all the true key-note of the sentiment belonging to these grand pageants. They are, says the poet, speaking in a case where the appearance had occurred towards night,

> "Meek nature's evening comment on the shows
> And all the fuming vanities of earth."

Yes, that is the secret moral whispered to the mind. These mimicries express the laughter which is in heaven at earthly pomps. Frail and vapoury are the glories of man, even as the visionary parodies of those glories are frail,

even as the scenical copies of these glories are frail, which nature weaves in clouds.

As another of those natural appearances which must have haunted men's eyes since the Flood, but yet had never forced itself into *conscious* notice until arrested by Wordsworth, I may notice an effect of *iteration* daily exhibited in the habits of cattle:—

> "The cattle are grazing,
> Their heads never raising,
> There are forty feeding like one."

Now, merely as a *fact*, and if it were nothing more, this characteristic appearance in the habits of cows, when all repeat the action of each, ought not to have been overlooked by those who profess themselves engaged in holding up a mirror to nature. But the fact has also a profound meaning as a hieroglyphic. In all animals which live under the protection of man a life of peace and quietness, but do not share in his labours or in his pleasures, what we regard is the species, and not the individual. Nobody but a grazier ever looks at one cow amongst a field of cows, or at one sheep in a flock. But as to those animals which are more closely connected with man, not passively connected, but actively, being partners in his toils, and perils, and recreations—such as horses, dogs, falcons—they are regarded as individuals, and are allowed the benefit of an individual interest. It is not that cows have not a differential character, each for herself; and sheep, it is well known, have all a separate physiognomy for the shepherd who has cultivated their acquaintance. But men generally have no opportunity or motive for studying the individualities of creatures, however otherwise respectable, that are too much regarded by all of us in the reversionary light of milk, and beef, and mutton.

Far otherwise it is with horses, who share in man's martial risks, who sympathise with man's frenzy in hunting, who divide with man the burdens of noonday. Far otherwise it is with dogs, that share the hearths of man, and adore the footsteps of his children. These man loves; of these he makes dear, though humble friends. These often fight for *him;* and for *them* he reciprocally will sometimes fight. Of necessity, therefore, every horse and every dog is an individual—has a sort of personality that makes him *separately* interesting—has a beauty and a character of his own. Go to Melton, therefore, on some crimson morning, and what will you see? Every man, every horse, every dog, glorying in the plenitude of life, is in a different attitude, motion, gesture, action. It is not there the sublime unity which you must seek, where forty are like one; but the sublime infinity, like that of ocean, like that of Flora, like that of nature, where no repetitions are endured, no leaf is the copy of another leaf, no absolute identity, and no painful tautologies. This subject might be pursued into profounder recesses; but in a popular discussion it is necessary to forbear.

A volume might be filled with such glimpses of novelty as Wordsworth has first laid bare, even to the apprehension of the *senses.* For the *understanding,* when moving in the same track of human sensibilities, he has done only not so much. How often (to give an instance or two) must the human heart have felt the case, and yearned for an expression of the case, when there are sorrows which descend far below the region in which tears gather; and yet who has ever given utterance to this feeling until Wordsworth came with his immortal line:—

"Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears?"

This sentiment, and others that might be adduced (such

as "The child is father of the man"), have even passed into the popular heart, and are often quoted by those who know not *whom* they are quoting. Magnificent, again, is the sentiment, and yet an echo to one which lurks amongst all hearts, in relation to the frailty of merely human schemes for working good, which so often droop and collapse through the unsteadiness of human energies—

> "Foundations must be laid
> In heaven."

How? Foundations laid in realms that are *above?* But *that* is impossible; *that* is at war with elementary physics; foundations must be laid *below.* Yes; and even so the poet throws the mind yet more forcibly on the hyperphysical character—on the grandeur transcending all physics —of those spiritual and shadowy foundations which alone are enduring.

But the great distinction of Wordsworth, and the pledge of his increasing popularity, is the extent of his sympathy with what is *really* permanent in human feelings, and also the depth of this sympathy. Young and Cowper, the two earlier leaders in the province of meditative poetry, are too circumscribed in the range of their sympathies, too narrow, too illiberal, and too exclusive. Both these poets manifested the quality of their strength in the quality of their public reception. Popular in some degree from the first, they entered upon the inheritance of their fame almost at once. Far different was the fate of Wordsworth; for in poetry of this class, which appeals to what lies deepest in man, in proportion to the native power of the poet, and his fitness for permanent life, is the strength of resistance in the public taste. Whatever is too original will be hated at the first. It must slowly mould a public for itself; and the resistance of the early thoughtless judg-

ments must be overcome by a counter resistance to itself, in a better audience slowly mustering against the first. Forty and seven years* it is since William Wordsworth first appeared as an author. Twenty of those years he was the scoff of the world, and his poetry a by-word of scorn. Since then, and more than once, senates have rung with acclamations to the echo of his name. Now at this moment, whilst we are talking about him, he has entered upon his seventy-sixth year. For himself, according to the course of nature, he cannot be far from his setting; but his poetry is only now clearing the clouds that gathered about its rising. Meditative poetry is perhaps that province of literature which will ultimately maintain most power amongst the generations which are coming; but in this department, at least, there is little competition to be apprehended by Wordsworth from anything that has appeared since the death of Shakspere

* Written in 1845; *i.e.*, about twelve years ago.

JOHN KEATS.

Mr Gilfillan (in his "Gallery of Literary Portraits") introduces this section with a discussion upon the constitutional peculiarities ascribed to men of genius; such as nervousness of temperament, idleness, vanity, irritability, and other disagreeable tendencies ending in *ty* or in *ness*—one of the *ties* being "poverty;" which disease is at least not amongst those morbidly cherished by the patients. All that can be asked from the most penitent man of genius is, that he should humbly confess his own besetting infirmities, and endeavour to hate them; and, as respects this one infirmity at least, I never heard of any man (however eccentric in genius) who did otherwise. But what special relation has such a preface to Keats? His whole article occupies twelve pages, and six of these are allotted to this preliminary discussion, which perhaps equally concerns every other man in the household of literature. Mr Gilfillan seems to have been acting here on celebrated precedents. The "*Omnes homines qui sese student præstare cæteris animalibus*" has long been "smoked" by a wicked posterity as an old hack of Sallust's, fitted on with paste and scissors to the Catalinarian conspiracy. Cicero candidly admits that he kept in his writing-desk

an assortment of moveable prefaces, beautifully fitted (by means of avoiding all questions but "the general question") for parading, *en grand costume*, before any conceivable book. And Coleridge, in his early days, used the image of a man's "sleeping under a manchineel tree," alternately with the case of Alexander's killing his friend Clitus, as resources for illustration which Providence had bountifully made inexhaustible in their applications. No emergency could by possibility arise to puzzle the poet, or the orator, but one of these similes (please Heaven!) should be made to meet it. So long as the manchineel continued to blister with poisonous dews those who confided in its shelter, so long as Niebuhr should kindly forbear to prove that Alexander of Macedon was a hoax, and his friend Clitus a myth, so long was Samuel Taylor Coleridge fixed and obdurate in his determination that one or other of these images should come upon duty whenever, as a youthful rhetorician, he found himself on the brink of insolvency.

But it is less the generality of this preface, or even its disproportion, which fixes the eye, than the questionableness of its particular statements. In that part which reviews the *idleness* of authors, Horace is given up as too notoriously indolent; the thing, it seems, is past denying; but "not so Lucretius." Indeed! and how shall this be brought to proof? Perhaps the reader has heard of that barbarian prince, who sent to Europe for a large map of the world, accompanied by the best of English razors; and the clever use which he made of his importation was, that, first cutting out with exquisite accuracy the whole ring-fence of his own dominions, and then doing the same office, with the same equity (barbarous or barber-ous), for the dominions of a hostile neighbour, next he proceeded to weigh

off the rival segments against each other in a pair of gold scales; after which, of course, he arrived at a satisfactory algebraic equation between himself and his enemy. Now, upon this principle of comparison, if we should take any *common* edition (as the *Delphin* or the *Variorum*) of Horace and Lucretius, strictly shaving away all notes, prefaces, editorial absurdities, &c., all "flotsom" and "jetsom" that may have gathered like barnacles about the two weather-beaten hulks; in that case we should have the two old files undressed, and *in puris naturalibus;* they would be prepared for being weighed; and going to the nearest grocer's, we might then settle the point at once as to which of the two had been the idler man. I back Horace for *my* part; and it is my private opinion that, in the case of a quarto edition, the grocer would have to throw at least half-a-pound of sugar into the scale of Lucretius before he could be made to draw against the other. Yet, after all, this would only be a collation of quantity against quantity; whilst, upon a second collation of quality against quality (quality as regards the difficulties in the process of composition), the difference in amount of labour would appear to be as between the weaving of a blanket and the weaving of an exquisite cambric. The *curiosa felicitas* of Horace in his lyric compositions, the elaborate delicacy of workmanship in his thoughts and in his style, argue a scale of labour that, as against any equal number of lines in Lucretius, would measure itself by months against days. There are single odes in Horace that must have cost him a six weeks' seclusion from the wickedness of Rome. Do I then question the extraordinary power of Lucretius? On the contrary, I admire him as the first of demoniacs. The frenzy of an earth-born or a hell-born inspiration; divinity of stormy music

sweeping round us in eddies, in order to prove that for us there could be nothing divine; the grandeur of a prophet's voice rising in angry gusts, by way of convincing us that all prophets were swindlers; oracular scorn of oracles; frantic efforts, such as might seem reasonable in one who was scaling the heavens, for the purpose of degrading all things, making man to be the most abject of necessities as regarded his origin, to be the blindest of accidents as regarded his expectations; these fierce antinomics expose a mode of insanity, but of an insanity affecting a sublime intellect.* And most people who read Lucretius at all, are aware of the traditional story current in Rome, that he did actually write in a delirious state; not under any figurative disturbance of brain, but under a real physical disturbance from philtres administered to him by some enamoured woman. But this kind of morbid *afflatus* did not deliver itself into words and metre by lingering oscillations, and through processes of stealthy growth: it threw itself forward, and precipitated its own utterance, with the headlong movement of a cataract. It was an

* There is one peculiarity about Lucretius which, even in the absence of all anecdotes to that effect, would have led an observing reader to suspect some unsoundness in his brain. It is this, and it lies in his manner. In all poetic enthusiasm, however grand and sweeping may be its compass, so long as it is healthy and natural, there is a principle of self-restoration in the opposite direction; there is a counter state of repose, a compensatory state, as in the tides of the sea, which tends continually to re-establish the equipoise. The lull is no less intense than the fury of commotion. But in Lucretius there is no lull. Nor would there *seem* to be any, were it not for two accidents—first, the occasional pause in his raving tone enforced by the interruption of an episode; secondly, the restraints (or at least the suspensions) imposed upon him by the difficulties of *argument conducted in verse*. To dispute metrically, is as embarrassing as to run or dance when knee-deep in sand. Else, and apart from these counteractions, the motion of the style is not only stormy, but self-kindling, and continually accelerated.

æstrum, a rapture, the bounding of a mœnad, by which the muse of Lucretius lived and moved. So much is known by the impression about him current among his contemporaries; so much is evident in the characteristic manner of his poem, if all anecdotes had perished. And, upon the whole, let the proportions of power between Horace and Lucretius be what they may, the proportions of labour are absolutely incommensurable: in Horace the labour was *directly* as the power, in Lucretius *inversely* as the power. Whatsoever in Horace was best, had been obtained by *most* labour; whatsoever in Lucretius was best, by *least*. In Horace, the exquisite skill co-operated with the exquisite nature; in Lucretius, the powerful nature disdained the skill, which, indeed, would not have been applicable to *his* theme, or to *his* treatment of it, and triumphed through mere precipitation of volume, and headlong fury.

Another paradox of Mr Gilfillan's, under this head, is, that he classes Dr Johnson as indolent; and it is the more startling, because he does not utter it as a careless opinion upon which he might have been thrown by inconsideration, but as a concession extorted from him reluctantly: he had sought to evade it, but could not. Now, that Dr Johnson had a morbid predisposition to decline labour from his scrofulous habit of body,* is probable. The question

* "*Habit of body:*" but much more from mismanagement of his body. Dr Johnson tampered with medical studies, and fancied himself learned enough in such studies to prescribe for his female correspondents. The affectionateness with which he sometimes did this is interesting; but his ignorance of the subject is not the less apparent. In his own case he had the merit of one heroic self-conquest: he weaned himself from wine, once having become convinced that it was injurious. But he never brought himself to take regular exercise. He ate too much at all times of his life. And in another point, he betrayed a thoughtlessness, which (though really common as laughter) is yet extravagantly childish. Everybody knows that Dr Johnson was all his life reproaching himself with

for us, however, is not what nature prompted him to do, but what he did. If he had an extra difficulty to fight with in attempting to labour, the more was his merit in the known result, that he *did* fight with that difficulty, and that he conquered it. This is undeniable. And the attempt to deny it presents itself in a comic shape, when one imagines some ancient shelf in a library that has groaned for nearly a century under the weight of the doctor's works, demanding, "How say you? Is this Sam Johnson, whose 'Dictionary' alone is a load for a camel, one of those authors whom you call idle? Then Heaven preserve us poor oppressed book-shelves from such as you will consider active." George III., in a compliment as happily turned as any one of those ascribed to Louis XIV., expressed his opinion upon this question of the doctor's industry by saying, that he also should join in thinking Johnson too voluminous a contributor to literature, were

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lying too long in bed. Always he was sinning (for he thought it a sin); always he was repenting; always he was vainly endeavouring to reform. But why vainly? Cannot a resolute man in six weeks bring himself to rise at *any* hour of the twenty-four? Certainly he can; but not without appropriate means. Now the doctor rose about eleven A.M. This, he fancied, was shocking; he was determined to rise at eight, or at seven. Very well; why not? But will it be credited that the one sole change occurring to the doctor's mind was to take a flying leap backwards from eleven to eight, without any corresponding leap at the other terminus of his sleep. To rise at eight instead of eleven, presupposes that a man goes off to bed at twelve instead of three. Yet this recondite truth never to his dying day dawned on Dr Johnson's mind. The conscientious man continued to offend; continued to repent; continued to pave a disagreeable place with good intentions, and daily resolutions of amendment; but at length died full of years, without having once seen the sun rise, except in some Homeric description, written (as Mr Fynes Clinton makes it probable) thirty centuries before. The fact of the sun's rising at all the doctor adopted as a point of faith, and by no means of personal knowledge, from an insinuation to that effect in the most ancient of Greek books.

it not for the extraordinary merit of the contributions. Now it would be an odd way of turning the royal praise into a reproach, if we should say: "Sam, had you been a pretty good writer, we, your countrymen, should have held you to be also an industrious writer; but, because you are a *very* good writer, therefore we pronounce you a lazy vagabond."

Upon other points in this discussion there is some room to differ from Mr Gilfillan. For instance, with respect to the question of the comparative happiness enjoyed by men of genius, it is not necessary to argue, nor does it seem possible to prove, even in the case of any one individual poet, that, on the whole, he was either more happy or less happy than the average mass of his fellow-men: far less could this be argued as to the whole class of poets. What seems *really* open to proof is, that men of genius have a larger *capacity* of happiness, which capacity, both from within and from without, may be defeated in ten thousand ways. This seems involved in the very word *genius*. For, after all the pretended and hollow attempts to distinguish genius from talent, I shall continue to think (what heretofore I have advanced) that no distinction in the case is tenable for a moment but this—viz., that genius is that mode of intellectual power which moves in alliance with the *genial* nature: *i. e.*, with the capacities of pleasure and pain; whereas talent has no vestige of such an alliance, and is perfectly independent of all human sensibilities. Consequently, genius is a voice or breathing that represents the *total* nature of man, and, therefore, his enjoying and suffering nature, as well as his knowing and distinguishing nature; whilst, on the contrary, talent represents only a single function of that nature. Genius is the language which interprets the synthesis of the human spirit with

the human intellect, each acting through the other; whilst talent speaks only from the insulated intellect. And hence also it is that, besides its relation to suffering and enjoyment, genius always implies a deeper relation to virtue and vice; whereas talent has no shadow of a relation to *moral* qualities any more than it has to vital sensibilities. A man of the highest talent is often obtuse and below the ordinary standard of men in his feelings; but no man of genius can unyoke himself from the society of moral perceptions that are brighter, and sensibilities that are more tremulous, than those of men in general.

As to the examples * by which Mr Gilfillan supports his prevailing views, they will be construed by any ten thousand men in ten thousand separate modes. The objections are so endless, that it would be abusing the reader's time to urge them; especially as every man of the ten thousand will be wrong, and will also be right, in all varieties of proportion. Two only it may be useful to notice as examples, because involving some degree of error—viz.,

* One of these examples is equivocal, in a way that Mr Gilfillan is apparently not aware of. He cites Tickell, "whose very name" (he says) "savours of laughter," as being, "in fact, a very happy fellow." In the first place, Tickell would have been likely to "square," at Mr Gilfillan for that liberty taken with his name; or might even, in Falstaff's language, have tried to "tickle his catastrophe." It is a ticklish thing to lark with honest men's names. But, secondly, *which* Tickell? For there are two at the least in the field of English literature. The first Tickell, who may be described as Addison's Tickell, never tickled anything, that I know of, except Addison's vanity. But Tickell the second, who came into working order about fifty years later, was really a very pleasant fellow. In the time of Burke he diverted the whole nation by his poem of "Anticipation," in which he anticipated and dramatically rehearsed the course of a whole parliamentary debate (on a forged king's speech), which did not take place till a week or two afterwards. Such a mimicry was easy enough: but *that* did not prevent its fidelity and characteristic truth from delighting the political world.

Addison and Homer. As to the first, the error, if an error, is one of fact only. Lord Byron had said of Addison, that he "died drunk." This seems to Mr Gilfillan a "horrible statement;" for which he supposes that no authority can exist, but "a rumour circulated by an inveterate gossip," meaning Horace Walpole. But gossips usually go upon some foundation, broad or narrow; and, until the rumour had been authentically put down, Mr Gilfillan should not have pronounced it a "malignant calumny." Me this story caused to laugh exceedingly; not at Addison, whose fine genius extorts pity and tenderness towards his infirmities; but at the characteristic misanthropy of Lord Byron, who chuckles, as he would do over a glass of nectar, on this opportunity for confronting the old solemn legend about Addison's sending for his stepson, Lord Warwick, to witness the peaceful death of a Christian, with so rich a story as this, that he, the said Christian, which is really not improbable, "died drunk." Supposing that he *did*, the mere physical fact of inebriation, in a stage of debility where so small an excess of stimulating liquor (though given medicinally) sometimes causes such an appearance, would not infer the moral blame of drunkenness; and if such a thing were ever said by any person *present* at the bedside, I should feel next to certain that it was said in that spirit of exaggeration to which most men are tempted by circumstances unusually fitted to impress a startling picturesqueness upon the statement. But, without insisting on Lord Byron's way of putting the case, there is no doubt that, latterly, Addison gave way to habits of intemperance. He had married a woman of rank, the Countess of Warwick; a woman by general report not amiable, but, at any rate, of trying and uneasy tem-

per.* From this cause he suffered considerably, but also (and probably much more) from dyspepsy and *tædium vitæ*. He did not walk one mile a-day, and he ought to have walked ten. To remedy these evils, I have always understood that every day (and especially towards night) he drank too much of that French liquor, which, calling itself *water of life*, nine times in ten proves the water of death. He lived latterly at Kensington—viz., in Holland House, the well-known residence of the Fox family, consequently for generations the hospitable rendezvous of the Whigs; and there it was, in this famous mansion (where, as Jack Cade observes, the very stones survive to this day as witnesses of the fact), that his intemperance was finished. The tradition attached to the gallery in that house is, that duly as the sun drew near to setting, on two tables, one at each end of the long *ambulachrum*, the Right Honourable Joseph placed, or caused to be placed, two tumblers, not of water slightly coloured with brandy, but of brandy slightly diluted with water; and those, the said tumblers, then and there did alternately to the lips of him, the aforesaid Joseph, diligently apply, walking to and fro during the process of exhaustion, and dividing his attentions between the two poles, arctic and antarctic, of his evening *diaulos*, with the impartiality to be expected from a member of the Privy Council. How often the two "blessed bears," northern and southern, were replenished, entered into no *affidavit* that ever reached my unworthy self. But so much I have always understood, that in the

* There is a well-known old Irish ballad repeatedly cited by Maria Edgeworth, which opens thus:—

"There was a young man in Ballinacrasy
That took him a wife to make him unasy."

Such to the letter was the life-catastrophe of Addison.

gallery of Holland House, the ex-Secretary of State caught a decided hiccup, which right-honourable hiccup never afterwards subsided. In all this there would have been little to shock people, had it not been for the sycophancy which ascribed to Addison a religious reputation such as he neither merited nor wished to claim. But one penal reaction of mendacious adulation, for him who is weak enough to accept it, must ever be, to impose restraints upon his own conduct, which otherwise he would have been free to decline. How lightly would Sir Roger de Coverly have thought of a little sotting in any honest gentleman of right politics! And Addison would not, in that age, and as to that point, have carried his scrupulosity higher than his own Sir Roger. But such knaves as he who had complimented Addison with the praise of having furnished a model to Christians of extra piety, whereas, in fact, Addison started in life by publishing a translation of Petronius Arbiter, had painfully coerced his free agency. This knave, I very much fear, was Tickell the first; and the result of his knavery was, to win for Addison a disagreeable sanctimonious reputation that was, first, founded in lies; secondly, that painfully limited Addison's free agency; and, thirdly, that provoked insults to his memory, since it pointed a censorious eye upon those things viewed as the acts of a demure pretender to extra devotion, which would else have passed without notice as the most venial of frailties in an unsanctimonious layman.

Something I had to say also upon Homer, who mingles amongst the examples cited by Mr Gilfillan of apparent happiness connected with genius. But, for want of room,*

* For the same reason, I refrain from discussing the pretensions of Savage. Mr Gilfillan gives us to understand, that not from want of

I forbear to go further, than to lodge my protest against imputing to Homer, as any personal merit, what belongs altogether to the stage of society in which he lived. "They," says Mr Gilfillan, speaking of the "Iliad" and the "Odyssey," "are the healthiest of works. There are in them no sullenness, no querulous complaint, not one personal allusion." But I ask, how *could* there have been? Subjective poetry had not an existence in those days. Not only the powers for introverting the eye upon the *spectator*, as himself the *spectaculum*, were then undeveloped and inconceivable, but the sympathies did not exist to which such an appeal could have addressed itself. Besides, and partly from the same cause, even as objects, the human feelings and affections were too grossly and imperfectly distinguished; had not reached even the infancy of that stage in which the passions begin their processes of intermodification; nor *could* have reached it, from the simpli-

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materials, but of time, he does not (which else he *could*) prove him to be the man he pretended to be. For my own part, I believe Savage to have been the vilest of swindlers; and in these days, under the surveillance of a searching police, he would have lost the chance which he earned of being hanged,* by being long previously transported to the Plantations. How can Mr Gilfillan allow himself, in a case of this nature, to speak of "universal impression" (if it had even existed) as any separate ground of credibility for Savage's tale? When the public have no access at all to sound means of judging, what matters it in which direction their "impression" lies, or how many thousands swell the belief for which not one in all these thousands has anything like a reason to offer?

* Savage had actually received sentence of death for murder perpetrated in a tavern brawl. The royal clemency interposed most critically to save him from the scaffold; but under an impression utterly without foundation as to his maternal persecutions. Not he by his mother, but his pretended mother by him, was systematically persecuted for years, as a means of extorting money. Suppose his pretensions true, would a person of any manliness have sought to win his daily bread from the terrors of her whom he claimed as his mother?

city of social life, as well as from the barbarism of the Greek religion. The author of the "Iliad," or even of the "Odyssey" (though, doubtless, belonging to a later period), could not have been "unhealthy," or "sullen," or "querulous," from any cause, except *psora* or *elephantiasis*, or scarcity of beef, or similar afflictions, with which it is quite impossible to inoculate poetry. The metrical romances of the middle ages have the same shivering character of starvation, as to the inner life of man; and, if *that* constitutes a meritorious distinction, no man ought to be excused for wanting what it is so easy to obtain by simple neglect of culture. On the same principle, a cannibal, if truculently indiscriminate in his horrid diet, might win sentimental praises for his temperance; others (it might be alleged) were picking and choosing, miserable epicures! but he, the saint upon earth, cared not what he ate; any joint satisfied *his* moderate desires; shoulder of man, leg of child; anything, in fact, that was nearest at hand, so long as it was good, wholesome human flesh; and the more plainly dressed the better.

But these topics, so various and so fruitful, I touch only because I find them introduced, amongst many others, by Mr Gilfillan. Separately viewed, some of these would be more attractive than any merely personal interest connected with Keats. His biography, stripped of its false colouring, offers little to win attention; for he was not the victim of any systematic malignity, as has been represented. He met, as I have the best reason to believe, with unusual kindness from his liberal publishers, Messrs Taylor & Hessey. He met with unusual severity from a cynical reviewer, the late Mr Gifford, then editor of the "Quarterly Review." The story ran, that this article of Mr Gifford's had killed Keats; upon which, with natural

astonishment, Lord Byron thus commented, in the eleventh canto of "Don Juan:"—

> "John Keats—who was kill'd off by one critique,
> Just as he really promised something great,
> If not intelligible—without Greek,
> Contrived to talk about the gods of late,
> Much as they might have been supposed to speak.
> Poor fellow! his was an untoward fate:
> 'Tis strange the mind, that very fiery particle,*
> Should let itself be snuff'd out by an article."

Strange, indeed! and the friends who honour Keats's memory should not lend themselves to a story so degrading. He died, I believe, of pulmonary consumption, and would have died of it, probably, under any circumstances of prosperity as a poet. Doubtless, in a condition of languishing decay, slight causes of irritation act powerfully. But it is hardly conceivable that one ebullition of splenetic bad feeling, in a case so proverbially open to endless revision as the pretensions of a poet, could have overthrown any masculine life, unless where that life had already been *irrecoverably* undermined by sickness. As a man, and viewed in relation to social objects, Keats was nothing. It was as mere an affectation when he talked with apparent zeal of liberty, or human rights, or human prospects, as is the hollow enthusiasm which innumerable people profess for music, or most poets for external nature. For these things Keats fancied that he cared; but in reality, from all I can learn, he cared next to nothing. Upon them, or any of their aspects, he had thought too little, and too indeterminately, to feel for them as personal concerns. Whereas Shelley, from his earliest days, was mastered and shaken by the great moving realities of life, as

* "*Fiery particle:*"—Lord Byron is loosely translating the expression of Horace—*divinæ particula auræ.*

a prophet is by the burden of wrath or of promise which he has been commissioned to reveal. Had there been no such thing as literature, Keats would have dwindled into a cipher. Shelley, in the same event, would hardly have lost one plume from his crest. It is in relation to literature, and to the boundless questions as to the true and the false arising out of literature and poetry, that Keats challenges a fluctuating interest, sometimes an interest of strong disgust, sometimes of deep admiration. There is not, I believe, a case on record throughout European literature, where feelings so repulsive of each other have centred in the same individual. The very midsummer madness of affectation, of false vapoury sentiment, and of fantastic effeminacy, seemed to me combined in Keats's "Endymion," when I first saw it, near the close of 1821. The Italian poet, Marino, had been reputed the greatest master of gossamery affectation in Europe. But *his* conceits showed the palest of rosy blushes by the side of Keats's bloody crimson. Naturally, I was discouraged at the moment from looking further. But about a week later, by pure accident, my eye fell upon his "Hyperion." The first feeling was that of incredulity that the two poems could, under change of circumstances or lapse of time, have emanated from the same mind. The "Endymion" trespasses so strongly against good sense and just feeling, that, in order to secure its pardon, we need the whole weight of the imperishable "Hyperion;" which, as Mr Gilfillan truly says, "is the greatest of poetical torsos." The first belongs essentially to the vilest collections of wax-work fillagree, or gilt gingerbread. The other presents the majesty, the austere beauty, and the simplicity of a Grecian temple enriched with Grecian sculpture.

We have in this country a word—viz., the word *folly*—

which has a technical appropriation to the case of fantastic buildings. Any building is called a "folly"* which mimics purposes incapable of being realised, and makes a promise to the eye which it cannot keep to the experience. The most impressive illustration of that idea which modern times have seen was, undoubtedly, the ice-palace of the Empress Elizabeth—†

"That most magnificent and mighty freak,"

which, about eighty years ago, was called up from the depths of winter by

"The imperial mistress of the fur-clad Russ."

Winter and the Czarina were, in this architecture, fellow-

* "*A folly:*"—We English limit the application of this term to buildings; but the idea might as fitly be illustrated in other objects. For instance, the famous galley presented to one of the Ptolemies, which offered the luxurious accommodations of capital cities, but required a little army of four thousand men to row it, whilst its draught of water was too great to allow of its often approaching the shore; this was a "folly" in our English sense. So again was the Macedonian phalanx: the Roman legion could form upon *any* ground: it was a true working tool. But the phalanx was too fine and showy for use. It required for its manœuvring a sort of opera stage, or a select bowling-green, such as few fields of battle offered.

† I had written the "Empress *Catherine;*" but, on second thoughts, it occurred to me that the "mighty freak" was, in fact, due to the Empress Elizabeth. There is, however, a freak connected with ice, not quite so "mighty," but quite as autocratic, and even more feminine in its caprice, which belongs exclusively to the Empress Catherine. A lady had engaged the affections of some young nobleman, who was already regarded favourably by the imperial eye. No pretext offered itself for interdicting the marriage; but, by way of freezing it a little at the outset, the Czarina coupled with her permission this condition—that the wedding night should be passed by the young couple on a mattress of *her* gift. The mattress turned out to be a block of ice, elegantly cut by the court upholsterer into the likeness of a well-stuffed Parisian mattress. One pities the poor bride, whilst it is difficult to avoid laughing in the midst of one's sympathy. But it is to be hoped that no *ukase* was issued against spreading seven Turkey carpets, by way of under-blankets, over this amiable nuptial present. Amongst others to whom I may refer as having noticed the story, is Captain Colville Frankland, of the navy.

labourers. She, by her servants, furnished the blocks of ice, hewed them, dressed them, laid them; winter furnished the cement, by freezing them together. The palace has long since thawed back into water; and the poet who described it best—viz., Cowper—is perhaps but little read in this age, except by the religious. It will, therefore, be a sort of resurrection for both the palace and the poet, if I cite his description of this gorgeous folly. It is a passage in which Cowper assumes so much of a Miltonic tone, that, of the two, it is better to have read his lasting description, than to have seen, with bodily eyes, the fleeting reality. The poet is apostrophising the Empress Elizabeth.

"No forest fell,
When *thou* wouldst build: no quarry sent its stores
To enrich thy walls: but thou didst hew the floods,
And make thy marble of the glassy wave.
* * * * * *
Silently as a dream the fabric rose;
No sound of hammer or of saw was there;
Ice upon ice, the well-adjusted parts
Were soon conjoin'd, nor other cement ask'd
Than water interfused to make them one.
Lamps gracefully disposed, and of all hues,
Illumined every side; a watery light
Gleam'd through the clear transparency, that seem'd
Another moon new-risen:——
* * * * * *
Nor wanted aught within
That royal residence might well befit
For grandeur or for use. Long wavy wreaths
Of flowers, that fear'd no enemy but warmth,
Blush'd on the panels. Mirror needed none,
Where all was vitreous: but in order due
Convivial table and commodious seat
(What *seem'd* at least commodious seat) were there;
Sofa, and couch, and high-built throne august.
The same lubricity was found in all,
And all was moist to the warm touch; a scene
Of evanescent glory, once a stream,
And soon to slide into a stream again."

The poet concludes by viewing the whole as an unintentional stroke of satire by the Czarina

> "On her own estate,
> On human grandeur, and the courts of kings.
> 'Twas transient in its nature, as in show
> 'Twas durable; as worthless, as it seem'd
> Intrinsically precious: to the foot
> Treacherous and false—it smiled, and it was cold.'

Looking at this imperial plaything of ice in the month of March, and recollecting that in May all its crystal arcades would be weeping away into vernal brooks, one would have been disposed to mourn over a beauty so frail, and to marvel at the solemn creation of a frailty so elaborate. Yet still there was some proportion observed: the saloons were limited in number, though *not* limited in splendour. It was a *petit Trianon.* But what if, like Versailles, this glittering bauble, to which all the science of Europe could not have secured a passport into June, had contained six thousand separate rooms? A "folly" on so gigantic a scale would have moved every man to indignation. For all that could be had, the beauty to the eye, and the gratification to the fancy, in seeing water tortured into every form of solidity, resulted from two or three suites of rooms, as fully as from a thousand.

Now, such a folly, as *would* have been the Czarina's, if executed upon the scale of Versailles, or of the new palace at St Petersburg, *was* the "Endymion:" a gigantic edifice (for its tortuous enigmas of thought multiplied every line of the four thousand into fifty) reared upon a basis slighter and less apprehensible than moonshine. As reasonably, and as hopefully in regard to human sympathies, might a man undertake an epic poem upon the loves of two butterflies. The modes of existence in the two parties to the

love-fable of the "Endymion," their relations to each other and to us, their prospects finally, and the obstacles to the *instant* realisation of these prospects—all these things are more vague and incomprehensible than the reveries of an oyster. Still the unhappy subject, and its unhappy expansion, must be laid to the account of childish years and childish inexperience. But there is another fault in Keats, of the first magnitude, which youth does not palliate, which youth even aggravates. This lies in the most shocking abuse of his mother-tongue. If there is one thing in this world which, next after the flag of his country and its spotless honour, should be holy in the eyes of a young poet —it is the *language* of his country. He should spend the third part of his life in studying this language, and cultivating its total resources. He should be willing to pluck out his right eye, or to circumnavigate the globe, if by such a sacrifice, if by such an exertion, he could attain to greater purity, precision, compass, or idiomatic energy of diction. This if he were even a Kalmuck Tartar—who, by the way, *has* the good feeling and patriotism to pride himself upon his beastly language.* But Keats was an English-

* Bergmann, the German traveller, in his account of his long rambles and residence amongst the Kalmucks, makes us acquainted with the delirious vanity which possesses these demi-savages. Their notion is, that excellence of every kind, perfection in the least things as in the greatest, is briefly expressed by calling it *Kalmuckish*. Accordingly, their hideous language, and their vast national poem (doubtless equally hideous), they hold to be the immediate gifts of inspiration: and for this I honour them, as each generation learns both from the lips of their mothers. This great poem, by the way, measures (if I remember) seventeen English miles in length; but the most learned man amongst them, in fact a monster of erudition, never read farther than the eighth milestone. What he could repeat by heart was little more than a mile and a-half; and, indeed, *that* was found too much for the choleric part of his audience. Even the Kalmuck face, which to us foolish Europeans looks so unnecessarily flat and ogre-like, these honest Kalmuckish Tartars have ascertained to be the

man; Keats had the honour to speak the language of Chaucer, Shakspere, Bacon, Milton, Newton. The more awful was the obligation of his allegiance. And yet upon this mother-tongue, upon this English language, has Keats trampled as with the hoofs of a buffalo. With its syntax, with its prosody, with its idiom, he has played such fantastic tricks as could enter only into the heart of a barbarian, and for which only the anarchy of Chaos could furnish a forgiving audience. Verily it required the "Hyperion" to weigh against the deep treason of these unparalleled offences.

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pure classical model of human beauty—which, in fact, it *is*, upon the principle of those people who hold that the chief use of a face is—not at all to please one's wife, but to frighten one's enemy.

HOMER AND THE HOMERIDÆ.

HOMER, the general patriarch of occidental literature, reminds us oftentimes, and powerfully, of the river Nile. If you, reader, should (as easily you may) be seated on the banks of that river in the months of February or March, 1858, you may count on two luxuries for a poetic eye—first, on a lovely cloudless morning; secondly, on a gorgeous Flora. For it has been remarked, that nowhere out of tropical regions is the vernal equipage of nature so rich, so pompously variegated, in buds, and bells, and blossoms, as precisely in this unhappy Egypt—"a house of bondage," undeniably, in all ages, to its own working population; and yet, as if to mock the misery it witnesses, the gayest of all lands in its spontaneous Flora. Now, supposing yourself to be seated, together with a child or two, on some flowery carpet of the Delta; and supposing the Nile—"that ancient river"—within sight; happy infancy on the one side, the everlasting pomp of waters on the other; and the thought still intruding, that on some quarter of your position, perhaps fifty miles out of sight, stand pointing to the heavens the mysterious pyramids; these circumstances presupposed, it is inevitable that your thoughts should wander upwards to the dark fountains of origination. The pyramids, why

and when did they arise? This infancy, so lovely and innocent, whence does it come, whither does it go? This creative river, what are its ultimate well-heads? That last question was viewed by antiquity as charmed against solution. It was not permitted, they fancied, to dishonour the river Nile by stealing upon his solitude in a state of weakness and childhood—

"Nec licuit populis parvum te, Nile, videre."

"No license there was to the nations of earth for seeing thee, O Nile! in a condition of infant imbecility."

So said Lucan. And in those days no image that the earth suggested could so powerfully express a mysterious secresy, as the coy fountains of the Nile. At length came Abyssinian Bruce; and that superstition seemed to vanish. Yet no: for now again the mystery has revolved upon us. You have drunk, you say, from the fountains of the Nile. Good; but, my friend, from which fountains? "Which king, Bezonian?" Understand that there is another branch of the Nile—another mighty arm, whose fountains lie in far other regions. The great letter Y, that Pythagorean marvel, is still covered with shades in one-half of its bifurcation. And the darkness which, from the eldest of days, has invested Father Nile with fabulous awe, still broods over the most ancient of his fountains, defies our curious impertinence, and will not suffer us to behold the survivor of Memphis in his cradle, and of Thebes the hundred-gated other than in his grandeur as the benefactor of nations.

Such thoughts, a world of meditations pointing in the same direction, settle also upon Homer. Eight-and-twenty hundred years, according to the improved views of chronology, have men drunk from the waters of this earliest among known poets. Himself, under one of his denominations, the son of a river [Melesigenes], or the grandson

of a river [Mæonides], he has been the parent of fertilising streams carried off derivatively into every land. Not the fountains of the Nile have been so diffusive, or so creative, as those of Homer—

"A quo, ceu fonte perenni,
Vatum Pieriis ora rigantur aquis."

"From whom, as from a perennial fountain, the mouths of poets are refreshed with Pierian streams."

There is the same gaiety of atmosphere, the same "blue rejoicing sky," the same absence of the austere and the gloomy sublime, investing the Grecian Homer as invests the Nile of the Delta. And again, if you would go upwards to the fountains of this ancient Nile, or of this ancient Homer, you would find the same mysterious repulsion. In both cases you find their fountains shyly retreating before you; and like the sacred peaks of Ararat, where the framework of Noah's ark reposes, never less surmounted than when a man fancies himself within arm's reach of their central recesses.*

A great poet appearing in early ages, and a great river, bear something of the same relation to human civility and culture. In this view, with a peculiar sublimity, the Hindoos consider a mighty fertilising river, when bursting away with torrent rapture from its mountain cradle, and billowing onwards through two thousand miles of realms made rich by itself, as in some special sense "the Son of God." The word Burrampooter is said to bear that sublime interpretation. Hence arose the profound interest about the Nile: what cause could produce its annual

* Seven or eight Europeans—some Russian, some English—have not only taken possession of the topmost crag on Ararat by means of the broadest disk which their own persons offered, but have left flags flying, to mark out for those below the exact station which they had reached. All to no purpose! The bigoted Armenian still replied—these are mere illusions worked by demons. This incredulity in the people of Armenia

swelling? Even as a phenomenon (had it led to nothing) *this* was awful, but much more so as a creative agency; for it was felt that Egypt, which is but the valley ploughed out for itself by the Nile, had been the mere creation of the river annually depositing its rich layers of slime. Hence also arose the corresponding interest about Homer; for Greece and the Grecian Isles were in many moral respects as much the creation of Homer as Egypt of the Nile. And if, on the one hand, it is unavoidable to assume some degree of civilisation before a Homer could exist, on the other, it is certain that Homer, by the picture of unity which he held aloft to the Greeks, in making them co-operate to a common enterprise against Asia, and also by the intellectual pleasure which he first engrafted upon the innumerable festivals of Hellas, did more than lawgivers to propagate this early civilisation, and to protect it against those barbarising feuds or migrations which through some centuries menaced its existence.

Having, therefore, the same motive of curiosity—having, in the indulgence of this curiosity, the same awe, connected, first, with secresy; secondly, with remoteness; and thirdly, with beneficent power, which turn our inquiries

is the result of mere religious bigotry. But in a similar case, amongst people that ought to be more enlightened—yes, amongst educated Sicilians of high social standing—the same angry disbelief is the product of pure mortified vanity. About the time of Waterloo, Captain Smyth settled the height of Mount Etna finally at 10,874 feet; this result was scientifically obtained, and not open to any reasonable doubts. Nine years later, Sir John Herschel, knowing nothing of this previous measurement, ascertained the height to be 10,872½ feet—a most remarkable coincidence; and the more satisfactory as being obtained barometrically, whilst Captain Smyth's measurement had been trigonometrical. Many of the people in Catania, however, who had been in the habit for half-a century of estimating the height at 13,000 feet, were so incensed at this degradation of their pretensions, that even yet (thirty-three years later) they have not reconciled themselves to the mathematical truth.

to the infant Nile, let us pursue a parallel investigation with regard to the infant Homer. How was Homer possible? how could such a poet as Homer—how could such a poem as the "Iliad"—arise in days so illiterate? Or rather, and first of all, *was* Homer possible? If the "Iliad" could and did arise, not as a long series of separate phenomena, but as one solitary birth of revolutionary power, how was it preserved? how passed onwards from generation to generation? how propagated over Greece during centuries, when our modern facilities for copying on paper, and the general art of reading, were too certainly unknown?

I presume every man of letters to be aware, that, since the time of the great German philologer, Fred. Augustus Wolf (for whose life and services to literature, see Wilhelm Koerte's "Leben und Studien Friedr. Aug. Wolfs:" "Life and Studies of F. A. Wolf," 1833), a great shock has been given to the slumbering credulity of men on these Homeric subjects; a galvanic resuscitation to the ancient scepticism on the mere possibility of an "Iliad," such as we now have it, issuing sound and complete, in the tenth or eleventh century before Christ, from the brain of a blind man, who had not *(they say)* so much as chalk towards the scoring down of his thoughts. The doubts moved by Wolf in 1795 propagated a controversy in Germany which has subsisted down to the present time. This controversy concerns Homer himself, and his first-born child, the "Iliad;" for as to the "Odyssey," sometimes reputed the child of his old age, and as to the minor poems, which never could have been ascribed to him by philosophic critics, these are universally given up, as having no more connection with Homer personally than any other of the many epic and cyclical poems which arose during post-

Homeric ages, in a spirit of imitation, more or less widely diverging from the primitive Homeric model.

Fred. Wolf raised the question soon after the time of the French Revolution. Afterwards he pursued it (1797) in his letters to Heyne. But it is remarkable that a man so powerful in scholarship, witnessing the universal fermentation he had caused, should not have responded to the general call upon himself to come forward and close the dispute with a comprehensive valuation of all that had been said, and all that yet remained to be said, upon this difficult problem. Voss, the celebrated translator of Homer into German dactylic hexameters, was naturally interested by a kind of personal stake in the controversy. He wrote to Wolf—warmly, perhaps, and in a tone almost of moral remonstrance—but without losing his temper, or forgetting the urbanity of a scholar. "I believe," said he in his later correspondence of the year 1796—"I believe in one 'Iliad,' in one 'Odyssey,' and in one Homer as the sole father of both. Grant that Homer could not write his own name—and so much I will concede that your acute arguments have almost demonstrated—still to my thinking *that* only enhances the glory of the poet. The unity of this poet (that there were not more authors of the 'Iliad' than one), and the unity of his works (that the 'Iliad' was not made up by welding into a fictitious unity many separate heroic ballads), are as yet to me unshaken ideas. But what then? I am no bigot in my creed, so as to close my ears against all hostile arguments. And these arguments, let me say plainly, you now owe to us all; arguments drawn from the *internal* structure of the Homeric poems. You have wounded us, Mr Wolf, in our affections; Mr Wolf, you have affronted us in our tenderest sensibilities. You *have*, Mr Wolf. But still we are just

men; ready to listen, willing to bear and to forbear. Meantime the matter cannot rest here. You owe it, Mr Wolf, to the dignity of the subject, not to keep back those proofs which doubtless you possess; proofs, observe, conclusive proofs. For hitherto, permit me to say, you have merely played with the surface of the question. True, even that play has led to some important results; and for these no man is more grateful than myself. But the main battle, Mr Wolf, is still in arrear."

Mr Wolf, however, hearkened not to such appeals. He had called up spirits, by his evocation, more formidable than he looked for or could lay. Perhaps, like the goddess Eris at the wedding feast, he had merely sought to amuse himself by throwing a ball of contention amongst the literati: a little mischief was all that he intended, and a little learned Billingsgate all that he expected. Things had taken a wider circuit. Wolf's acuteness in raising objections to all the received opinions had fallen upon a kindly soil; the public mind had reacted powerfully; for the German mind is but too naturally disposed to scepticism; and Mr Wolf found himself at length in this dilemma—viz., that either, by writing a very inadequate sequel, he must forfeit the reputation he had acquired; or else that he must prepare himself for a compass of research to which his spirits were not equal, and to which his studies had not latterly been directed. A man of high celebrity may be willing to come forward in undress, and to throw out such casual thoughts as the occasion may prompt, provided he can preserve his *incognito;* but, if he sees a vast public waiting to receive him with theatric honours, and a flourish of trumpets announcing his approach, reasonably he may shrink from facing expectations so highly raised; and perhaps in this case he might truly

plead an absolute impossibility of pursuing further the many questions arising under such original sterility of materials, and after so elaborate a cultivation by other labourers.

Wolf, therefore, is not to be blamed for having declined, in its mature stages, to patronise his own quarrel. *His own* I call it, because he first pressed its strongest points; because he first kindled it into a public feud; and because, by his own revisal of the Homeric text, he gave to the world, simultaneously with his doubts, the very strongest credentials of his right to utter doubts. And the public, during the interval of half-a-century which has succeeded to his first opening of the case, have viewed the question as so exclusively *his*, that it is generally known under the name of the Wolfian hypothesis. All this is so natural, that it is almost fair; that rebel who heads the mob of insurgents is rightly viewed as the father of the insurrection, whether partially disowning it or not. Yet still, in the rigour of justice, we must not overlook the earlier conspirators. Not to speak here of more ancient sceptics, it is certain that in modern times Bentley, something more than one hundred and sixty years back, with his usual divinity of eye, saw the opening for doubts. Already in the year 1689, when he was a young man fresh from college, Bentley gave utterance to several of those particular scruples which a later generation called by the too exclusive name of "*Wolfian*." And, indeed, had he done nothing more than call attention to the digamma, as applied to the text of Homer, he could not have escaped feeling and communicating these scruples. To a man who was one day speaking of some supposed *hiatus* in the "Iliad," Bentley, from whom courtesy flowed as naturally as "milk from a male tiger," called out, "*Hiatus*, man! *Hiatus* in your

throat! There is no such thing in Homer." And, when the other had timidly submitted to him such cases as μεγα ειπων or καλα εργα, or μελιηδεα οινον, Bentley showed him that, unless where the final syllable of the prior word happened to be *in arsi* (as suppose in Πηλ.ηιαδεω Αχιλ.ος), universally the *hiatus* had not existed to the ears of Homer. And why? Because it was cured by the interposition of the digamma: "Apud Homerum sæpe *videtur* hiatus esse, ubi prisca littera digamma explebat intermedium spatium." [In Homer there often *seems* to be a hiatus, where in fact that ancient letter the digamma filled up the intermediate space.] Thus μελιηδεα οινον in Homer's age was μελιηδεα Fοινον (from which Æolic form of οινος (the Greek word for *wine*) is derived our modern word for *wine* in all the western and central languages of Christendom; F is V, and V is W, all the world over—whence, therefore, vin, wine, vino, wein, wün, and so on; all originally depending upon that Æolic letter F, or digamma, that is V, that is W, which is so necessary to the metrical integrity of Homer). Now, when once a man of Bentley's sagacity had made that step—forcing him to perceive that here of old time had been people tampering with Homer's text (else how had the digamma dropped out of the place which once it must have occupied?)—he could not but go a little further. If you see one or two of the indorsements on a bill misspelt, you begin to suspect a case of *general* forgery. When the text of Homer had once become frozen and settled, no man could take liberties with it at the risk of being tripped up himself on its glassy surface, and landed in a lugubrious sedentary posture, to the derision of all critics, compositors, pressmen, devils, and devillets. But, whilst the text was yet in a state of fusion, or lukewarm, or in the transitional state of cooling, every man who had a private purpose to

serve might impress upon its plastic wax whatever alterations he pleased, whether by direct addition or by substitution, provided only he had skill to evade any ugly seam or cicatrice. It is true he could run this adulterated Homer only on that particular road to which he happened to have access. But then, in after generations, when all the Homers were called in by authority for general collation, *his* would go up with the rest; his forgery would be accepted for a various reading, and would thus have a fair chance of coming down to posterity—which word means, at this moment, the reader and myself. We are posterity. Yes, even we have been humbugged by this Pagan rascal; and have doubtless drunk off much of his swipes, under the firm faith that we were drinking the pure fragrant wine (the μελιηδεα Ϝοινον) of Homer.

Bentley having thus warned the public, by one general *caveat*, that tricks upon travellers might be looked for on this road, was succeeded by Wood, who, in his "Essay on the Genius of Homer," occasionally threw up rockets in the same direction. This essay first crept out in the year 1769, but only to the extent of seven copies; and it was not until the year 1775 * that a second edition diffused the new views freely amongst the world. The next memorable era for this question occurred in 1788, during which year it was that Villoison published his "Iliad;" and, as part of its apparatus, he printed the famous Venetian "Scholia," hitherto known only to inspectors of MSS. These "Scholia" gave strength to the modern doubts, by showing that many

* It is a proof, however, of the interest, even at that time, taken by Germany in English literature, as well as of the interest taken in this Homeric question, that one of the seven copies published in 1769 must have found its way to some German scholar; for already, in 1773, a German translation of Wood had been published at Frankfort.

of them were but ancient doubts in a new form. Still, as the worshipful Scholiasts do not offer the pleasantest reading in the world, most of them being rather drowsy or so—truly respectable men, but somewhat apoplectic—it could not be expected that any explosion of sympathy should follow: the clouds thickened; but the man who was to draw forth the lightnings from their surcharged volumes had not yet come forward. In the meantime, Herder, not so much by learning as by the sagacity of his genius, threw out some pregnant hints of the disputable points. And finally, in 1795, Wolf marched forth in complete mail, a sheaf of sceptical arrows rattling on his harness, all of which he pointed and feathered, giving by his learning, or by masculine sense, buoyancy to their flight, so as to carry them into every corner of literary Europe. Then began the "row"—then the steam was mounted which has never since subsided—and then opened upon Germany a career of scepticism, which from the very first promised to be contagious. It was a mode of revolutionary disease, which could not by its very nature confine itself to Homer. The religious reader has since had occasion to see, with pain, the same principles of audacious scepticism applied to books and questions more important; but, as might be shown upon a fitting occasion, with no reason whatever for serious anxiety as to any popular effect. Meantime, for those numerous persons who do not read Latin or German with fluency, but are familiar with French, the most comprehensive view of Wolf's arguments (as given in his Homeric "Prolegomena," or subsequently in his "Briefe an Heyne:" "Letters to Heyne"), is to be found in Franceson's "Essai sur la question—Si Homére a connu l'usage de l'écriture: Berlin, 1818."

This French work on the question whether Homer were

acquainted with the art of writing, I mention, as meeting the wants of those who simply wish to know how the feud began. But, as that represents only the early stages of the entire speculation, it will be more satisfactory for all who are seriously interested in Homer, and without partisanship seek to know the plain unvarnished truth—"Is Homer a hum, and the 'Iliad' a hoax?"—to consult the various papers on this subject which have been contributed by Nitzsch to the great "Allgemeine Encyclopædie" ("Universal Encyclopedia") of modern Germany. Nitzsch's name is against him; it is intolerable to see such a thicket of consonants with but one little bit of a vowel amongst them; it is like the proportions between Falstaff's bread and his sack. However, after all, the man did not make his own name; and the name looks worse than it sounds; for it is but our own word *niche*, barbarously written. This man's essays are certainly the most full and representative pleadings which this extensive question has produced. On the other hand, they labour in excess with the prevailing vices of German speculation—viz., first, vague indeterminate conception; secondly, total want of power to methodise or combine the parts, and indeed, generally a barbarian inaptitude for composition. But, waiving our quarrel with Nitzsch and with Nitzsch's name, no work of his can be considered as generally accessible; his body is not in court, and, if it were, it talks German. So in his chair I shall seat myself; and now, with one advantage over him—viz., that I shall never leave the reader to muse for an hour over my meaning—I propose to state the outline of the controversy; to report the decisions upon the several issues sent down for trial upon this complex suit; and the apparent tendencies, so far as they are yet discoverable, towards that kind of general judgment which must be deli-

vered by the Chancery of European criticism, before this dispute will subside into repose.

The great sectional or subordinate points into which the Homeric controversy breaks up, are these:—

1. *Homer*—that is, the poet as distinct from his works; the poet apart from the poems.

2. The "*Iliad*" and the "*Odyssey*"—that is, the poems as distinct from their author; the poems apart from the poet.

3. The *Rhapsodoi*, or poetic chanters of Greece; these, and their predecessors or their contemporaries—the *Aoidoi*, the *Citharœdi*, the *Homeridai*.

4. *Lycurgus*.

5. *Solon*—and the Pisistratidæ.

6. The *Diasceuastæ*; the Remodellers, or publishers of Recasts.

I hardly know at what point to take up this ravelled tissue; but, by way of tracing the whole theme *ab ovo*, suppose, reader, we begin by stating the chronological bearings of the principal objects (things as well as persons) connected with the "Iliad."

Ilium, or Troy, was that city of Asia Minor whose memorable fortunes and catastrophe furnished the subject of the "Iliad." At what period of human history may we reasonably suppose this catastrophe to have occurred? Never did a great man err so much as apparently Sir Isaac Newton, on this very question, in deducing the early chronology of Greece. The semi-fabulous section of Grecian annals he crowded into so narrow a space, and he depressed the whole into such close proximity to the regular opening of history (that is, to the Olympiads), that we are perfectly at a loss to imagine with what sort of men, events, and epochs, Sir Isaac would have peopled that par-

ticular interval of a thousand years in Grecian chronology, which corresponds to the scriptural interval between the patriarch Abraham and Solomon the Jewish king. This interval commences with the year 2000 before Christ, and terminates with the year 1000 before Christ. But such is the fury of Sir Isaac for depressing all events not absolutely fabulous below this latter terminus, that he has really left himself without counters to mark the progress of man, or to fill the cells of history, through a millennium of Grecian life. The whole thousand years, as respects Hellas, is a mere desert upon Sir Isaac's map of time. As one instance of Sir Isaac's modernising propensities, I never could sufficiently marvel at his supposing the map of the heavens, including those constellations which are derived from the Argonautic enterprise, to have been completed about the very time of that enterprise; as if it were possible that a coarse clumsy hulk like the ship Argo, at which no possible Newcastle collier but would have sneezed, or that any of the men who navigated her, could take a consecrated place in men's imagination, or could obtain an everlasting memorial in the starry heavens, until time, by removing gross features, and by blending all the circumstances with the solemnities of vast distance, had reconciled the feelings to a sanctity which must have been shocking, if applied to things local and familiar.

Far different from Sir Isaac's is the present chronological theory. Almost universally it is now agreed, that the siege of Troy occurred about 1300, or, at the lowest calculation, more than 1200 years before Christ. What, then, is the chronological relation of Homer to Troy? Perhaps the most tenable theory on this relation is that which represents the period of his flourishing as having been from two to three centuries after Troy. By some it was ima-

gined that Homer himself had been a Trojan; and therefore contemporary with the very heroes whom he exhibits. Others, like our Jacob Bryant, have fancied that he was not merely co-eval with those heroes, but actually was one of those heroes—viz., Ulysses; and that the "Odyssey," therefore, rehearses the personal adventures, the voyages, the calamities of Homer himself. It is our old friend the poet, but with a new face; he is now a soldier, a sailor, a king, and, in case of necessity, a very fair boxer, or "fistic artist," for the abatement of masterful beggars, "sorners," and other nuisances. But these wild fancies have found no success. All scholars have agreed in placing a deep gulf of years between Homer and that Ilium which he sang. Aristarchus fixes the era of Homer at 140 years after the Trojan war; Philochorus at 180 years; Apollodorus at 240; the Arundel Marbles at 302; and Herodotus, who places Homer about 400 years before his own time (which "*own time*" may be dated as about 450 B.C.), ought, therefore, to be interpreted as assuming 350 years at least between Homer and Troy. So that the earliest series of events connected from before and from behind with the Grecian bard may be thus arranged:—

Years bef. Christ.

1220—Trojan expedition.

1000—Homer a young man, and contemporary with the building of the *first* Temple at Jerusalem.

820—Lycurgus brings into the Peloponnesus from the island of Crete (or else from Ionia—that is, not from any island, but from some place in the mainland of Asia Minor), the Homeric poems, hitherto unknown upon the Grecian continent.

Up to this epoch (the epoch of transplanting the "Iliad" from Greece insular and Greece colonial to Greece conti-

ncntal), the Homeric poems had been left to the custody of two schools or professional orders, interested in the text of these poems: *how* interested, or in what way their duties connected them with Homer, I will not at this point inquire. Suffice it, that these two separate orders of men *did* confessedly exist; one being elder, perhaps, than Homer himself, or even than Troy—viz., the *Aoidoi*, or Chanters, and *Citharœdi*, or Harpers. These, no doubt, had originally no more relation to Homer than to any other narrative poet; their duty of musical recitation had brought them connected with Homer, as it would have done with any other popular poet; and it was only the increasing current of Homer's predominance over all rival poets, which gradually gave such a bias and inflection to these men's professional art, as at length to suck them within the great Homeric tide; they became, but were not originally, a sort of Homeric choir and orchestra—a chapel of priests having a ministerial duty in the vast Homeric cathedral. Through them exclusively, or, if not, certainly through them chiefly, the two great objects were secured —first, that to each successive generation of men Homer was *published* with all the advantages of a musical accompaniment; secondly, that for distant generations Homer was *preserved*. I do not thus beg the question as to the existence of alphabetic writing in the days of Homer; on the contrary, I go along with Nitzsch and others in opposing Wolf upon that point. I believe that a laborious and painful art of writing *did* exist; but with such disadvantages as to writing materials, that Homer (I am satisfied) would have fared ill as regarded his chance of reaching the polished age of Pericles, had he relied on written memorials, or upon any mode of publication less impassioned than the orchestral chanting of the *Rhapsodoi*. The other order of

men dedicated to some Homeric interest, whatever that might be, were those technically known as the *Homeridæ*. The functions of these men have never been satisfactorily ascertained, or so as to discriminate them broadly and firmly from the *Citharœdi* and *Rhapsodoi*. But in two features it is evident that they differed essentially—first, that the *Homeridæ* constituted a more *local* and domestic college of Homeric ministers, confined originally to a single island, not diffused (as were the *Rhapsodoi*) over all Greece; secondly, that by their very name, which refers them back to Homer as a mere radiation from his life-breathing orb, this class of followers is barred from pretending, in the Homeric equipage, (like the *Citharœdi*), to any independent existence, still less to any anterior existence. The musical reciters had been originally a general and neutral class of public ministers, gradually sequestered into the particular service of Homer; but the *Homeridæ* were, in some way or other, possibly by blood, or by fiction of love and veneration, Homer's direct personal representatives; like the green-turbaned Seyuds of Islamism, who claim a relation of consanguinity to the Prophet himself.

Thus far, however, though there is evidence of two separate colleges or incorporations who charged themselves with the general custody, transmission, and *publication* of the Homeric poems, we hear of no care applied to the periodical *review* of the Homeric text; we hear of no man taking pains to qualify himself for that office by collecting copies from all quarters, or by applying the supreme political authority of his own peculiar commonwealth to the conservation and the authentication of the Homeric poems. The text of no book can become an object of anxiety, until by numerous corruptions it has become an object of doubt. Lycurgus, it is true, the

Spartan lawgiver, *did* apply his own authority, in a very early age, to the general purpose of importing and naturalising the "Iliad." But there his office terminated. Critical skill, applied to the investigation of an author's text, was a function of the human mind as much unknown in the Greece of Lycurgus as in the Germany of Tacitus, or in the Tongataboo of Captain Cooke. And of all places in Greece, such delicate reactions of the intellect upon its own creations were least likely to arise amongst the illiterate Dorian tribes of the Peloponnesus—wretches that hugged their own barbarising institutions as the very jewels of their birthright, and would most certainly have degenerated rapidly into African brutality, had they not been held steady, hustled and forcibly shouldered into social progress, by the press of surrounding tribes, fortunately more intellectual than themselves.

Thus continued matters through about four centuries from Homer. And by that time we begin to feel anxious about the probable state of the Homeric text. Not that I suppose any *interregnum* in Homer's influence—not that I believe in any possible defect of links in that vast series of traditional transmitters; the integrity of that succession was guaranteed by its interwreathing itself with human pleasures, with religious ceremonies, with household and national festivals. It is not that Homer would have become apocryphal or obscure for *want* of public repetition; on the contrary, he would have suffered by too much repetition—too constant and too fervent a repetition would have been the main source of corruptions in the text. Sympathy in the audience must always have been a primary demand with the *Rhapsodoi;* and, to perfect sympathy, it is one antecedent condition to be perfectly understood. Hence, when allusions were no longer intelligible

or effectual, what result would be likely to follow? Too often it must happen that they would be dropped from the text; and when any Homeric family or city had become extinct, the temptation would be powerful for substituting the names of others who could delight the chanter by fervid gratitude for such a vicarious distinction where it had been visited, or could reward him with gifts where it had not. But it is not necessary to go over the many causes in preparation, after a course of four centuries, for gradually sapping the integrity of Homer's text. Everybody will agree, that it was at length high time to have some edition "by authority;" and that, had the "Iliad" and "Odyssey" received no freezing arrest in their licentious tendency towards a general interfusion of their substance, and an adulterating of their diction with modern words and ideas, most certainly by the time of Alexander—*i. e.*, about seven centuries from Homer—either poem would have existed only in fractions. The connecting parts between the several books would have dropped out; and all the ἀριστειαι, or episodes dedicated to the honour of a particular hero, might, with regard to names less hallowed in the imagination of Greece, or where no representatives of the house remained, have perished utterly. Considering the great functions of the Greek language subsequently in propagating Christianity, it was a real providential provision which caused the era of state editions to supersède the *ad libitum* text of the careless or the interested; and just at that precise period when the rapidly rising tide of Athenian refinement would else soon have swept away all the landmarks of primitive Greece, and when the altered character of the public reciters would have co-operated with the other difficulties of the case to make a true Homeric text irrecoverable. For the

Rhapsodoi were in a regular course of degradation to the rank of mere mercenary artists, from that of sacred minstrels, who connected the past with the present, and who sang—precisely because their burden of truth was too solemn for unimpassioned speech. This was the station they *had* occupied; but it remains in evidence against them, that they were rapidly sinking under the changes of the times; were open to bribes; and, as one consequence (whilst partly it was one cause) of this degradation, that they had ceased to command the public respect. The very same changes, and through the very same steps, and under the very same agencies, have been since exhibited to Europe in the parallel history of our mediæval minstrels. The pig-headed Ritson, in mad pursuit of that single idea (no matter what) which might vex Bishop Percy, made it his business, in one essay, to prove, out of the statutes at large, and out of local court records, that the minstrel, so far from being that honoured guest in the courts of princes whom the bishop had described, was in fact, by Act of Parliament, a rogue and a vagabond, standing in awe of the parish beadle, and liable to be kicked out of any hundred or tithing where he should be found trespassing. But what nonsense! All that Ritson said was virtually false, though plausibly half-true. The minstrel was, and he was not, all that the bishop and others had affirmed. The contradiction lay in the *time*: Percy and Ritson were speaking of different periods; the bishop of the twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth centuries—the attorney* of the sixteenth and seventeenth. Now the

* Ritson was the most litigious of attorneys; the leader of all black-letter literature; dreaded equally by Bishop Percy and Sir Walter Scott; but constantly falling into error through pure mulish perverseness. Of Greek he knew nothing. In Latin he was self taught, and consequently laid himself open to the scoffs of scholars better taught.

Grecian *Rhapsodoi* passed through corresponding stages of declension. Having ministered through many centuries to advancing civilisation, finally they themselves fell before a higher civilisation; and the particular aspect of the new civilisation, which proved fatal to *them*, was the general diffusion of reading as an art of liberal education. In the age of Pericles, every well-educated man could read; and one result from his skill, as no doubt it had also been one amongst its exciting causes, was, that he had a fine copy at home, beautifully adorned, of the "Iliad" and "Odyssey." Paper and vellum, for the last six centuries B.C. (that is, from the era of the Egyptian king Psammetichus), were much less scarce in Greece than during the ages immediately consecutive to Homer; and this scarcity it was that had retarded manuscript literature, as subsequently it retarded the art of printing.

How providential, therefore—and with the recollection of that great part played by Greece in propagating Christianity through the previous propagation of her own literature and language, what is there in such an interference unworthy of Providence?—how providential, that precisely in that interval of one hundred and eleven years, between the year 555 B.C., the *locus* of Pisistratus, and 444 B.C., the *locus* of Pericles, whilst as yet the traditional text of Homer was retrievable, though rapidly nearing to the time when it would be strangled with weeds, and whilst as yet the arts of reading and writing had not weakened the popular devotion to Homer by dividing it amongst multiplied books; just then in that critical isthmus of transitional time, did two or three Athenians of rank—first Solon, next Pisistratus, and lastly (if Plato is right), Hipparchus—step forward to make a public, solemn, and *legally* operative review of the Homeric poems. They drew the

old hulk into dock; laid bare its timbers; and stopped the further progress of decay. What more they did than this, and by what characteristic services each connected his name with a separate province in this memorable restoration of the "Iliad" and "Odyssey," I shall inquire further on.

One century after Pisistratus we come to Pericles; or, counting from the *locus* of each (555 B.C., and 444 B.C.), exactly one hundred and eleven years divide them. One century after Pericles we come to Alexander the Great; or, counting from the *locus* of each (444 B.C., and 333 B.C.), exactly one hundred and eleven years divide them. During this period of two hundred and twenty-two years Homer had rest. Nobody was tempted by any oblique interest to torment his text any more. And it is singular enough that this period of two hundred and twenty-two years, during which Homer reigned in the luxury of repose, having nothing to do but to let himself be read and admired, was precisely that ring-fence of years within which lies true Grecian history; for, if any man wishes to master the Grecian history, he needs not to ascend above Pisistratus, nor to come down below Alexander. Before Pisistratus all is mist and fable; after Alexander all is dependency and servitude. And remarkable it is, that, soon after Alexander, and indirectly through changes caused by him, Homer was again drawn out for the pleasure of the tormentors. Among the dynasties founded by Alexander's lieutenants was one memorably devoted to literature. The Macedonian house of the Ptolemies, when seated on the throne of Egypt, had founded the very first public library and the first learned public. Alexander died in the year 320 B.C.; and already in the year 280 B.C. (that is, not more than forty years after), the learned Jews of

Alexandria and Palestine had commenced, under the royal patronage, that translation of the Hebrew Scriptures into Greek which, from the supposed number of the translators—(viz., *septuaginta—seventy*), has obtained the name of the "Septuagint." This was a service to posterity. But the earliest *Grecian* service to which this Alexandrian Library ministers was Homeric; and strikes us as singular, when we contrast it with the known idolatry towards Homer of that royal soldier from whom the city itself, with all its novelties, drew its name and foundation. Had Alexander survived forty years longer, as very easily he might, if he had insisted upon leaving his heel-taps at Babylon, how angry it would have made him that the very first trial of this new and powerful galvanic battery, involved in the institution of a public library, should be upon the body of the "Iliad!"

From 280 B.C. to 160 B.C., there was a constant succession of Homeric critics. The immense material found in the public library towards a direct history of Homer and his fortunes, would alone have sufficed to evoke a school of critics. But there was, besides, another invitation to Homeric criticism, more oblique, and eventually more effective. The Alexandrian Library contained vast collections towards the study of the Greek language through all its dialects, and through all its chronological stages. This study led back by many avenues to Homer. A verse or a passage which hitherto had passed for genuine, and which otherwise, perhaps, yielded no internal argument for suspicion, was now found to be veined by some phrase, dialect, terminal form, or mode of using words, that might be too modern for Homer's age, or too far removed in space from Homer's Ionian country. We moderns, from our vast superiority to the Greeks themselves

in Greek metrical science, have in this science found an extra resource laid open to us for detecting the spurious in Greek poetry; and many are the condemned passages in our modern editions of Greek books, against which no jealousy would ever have arisen amongst unmetrical scholars. Here, however, the Alexandrian critics, with all their slashing insolence, showed themselves sons of the feeble; they groped about in twilight. But, even without that resource, they contrived to riddle Homer through and through with desperate gashes. In fact, after being "treated" and "handled" by three generations of critics, Homer came forth (just as we may suppose one of Lucan's legionary soldiers, from the rencounter with the amphisbæna, the dipsas, and the water-snake of the African wilderness) one vast wound, one huge system of confluent ulcers. Often, in reviewing the labours of three particularly amongst these Alexandrian scorpions, I think of the Æsopian fable, in which an old man with two wives, one aged as befitted him, and the other young, submits his head alternately to what may be called the Alexandrian revision of each. The old lady goes to work first; and upon "moral principle" she indignantly extirpates all the black hairs which could ever have inspired him with the absurd fancy of being young, and making love to a girl. Next comes the young critic: she is disgusted with age; and upon system eliminates (or, to speak with Aristarchus, "obelises") all the grey hairs. And thus, between the two ladies and their separate editions of the old gentleman, he, poor Homeric creature, comes forth as bald as the back of one's hand. Aristarchus might well boast that he had cured Homer of the dry-rot! he *has;* and by leaving hardly one whole spar of his ancient framework. Nor can I, with my poor share of penetration, comprehend what sort of

abortion it is which Aristarchus would have us to accept and entertain in the room of our old original "Iliad" and "Odyssey." To cure a man radically of the toothache, by knocking all his teeth down his throat, seems a suspicious recommendation for "dental surgery." And, with respect to the Homer of Aristarchus, it is to be considered, that besides the lines, sentences, and long passages, to which that Herod of critics affixed his *obelus* (†) or stiletto,* there were entire books which he found no use in obelising piecemeal; because it was not this line or that line into which he wished to thrust his dagger, but the whole rabble of lines—"tag, rag, and bobtail." Which reminds me of John Paul Richter, who suggests to some author anxiously revising the table of his own errata, that, perhaps, on reflection, he might see cause to put his whole book into the list of *errata;* requesting of the reader kindly to erase the total work as one entire oversight and continuous blunder, from page one down to the word *finis.* In such cases, as Martial observes, no plurality of cancellings or erasures will answer the critic's purpose: but "*una* litura potest." One mighty bucket of ink thrown over the whole will execute the critical sentence; but, as to obelising, *that* is no better than snapping pocket-pistols in a sea-fight.

With the Alexandrian tormentors, we may say that Homer's pre-Christian martyrdom came to an end. His post-Christian sufferings have been due chiefly to the Germans, who have renewed the warfare not only of Alexandrian critics, but of the ancient *Chorizontes.* These people I have not mentioned separately, because, in fact, nothing remains of their labours, and the general spirit of

* This *obelus,* or little spit, or in fact dagger, prefixed to a word, or verse, or paragraph, indicated that it might consider itself stabbed, and assassinated for ever.

their warfare may be best understood from that of modern Germany. They acquired their name of *Chorizontes* (or separators) from their principle of breaking up the "Iliad" into multiform groups of little tadpole "Iliads;" as also of splitting the one old hazy but golden Homer, that looms upon us so venerably through a mist of centuries, into a vast reverberation of little silver Homers, that twinkled up and down the world, and lived when they found it convenient.

Now, let us converge the separate points of this chronological deduction into one focus, after which I will try to review, each for itself, the main questions which I have already numbered as making up the elements of the controversy.

Years bef. Christian Era.

1220—Troy captured and burned after a ten years' siege.

1000—Solomon the king of Jewry, and Homer the Grecian poet, both young men "on the spree." In the thousandth year before Christ, without sound of chisel or hammer, the elder Temple was built in Jerusalem. In that same year, or thereabouts, rose silently, like an exhalation, the great Homeric temple of the "Iliad."

800—Lycurgus the lawgiver imports the "Iliad" into Sparta; and thus first transplants it from Greece insular and Greece colonial into Greece continental.

555—Solon, the Athenian lawgiver, Pisistratus, the ruler of Athens, and Hipparchus, his son, do something as yet undetermined for the better ascertaining and maintaining of the original Homeric text.

444—From the text thus settled must presumably have been cited the numerous Homeric passages which we find in Plato, and other wits of this period, the noontide of Greek literature—viz. the period

Years bef. Christian Era.

of Pericles; and these passages generally coincide with our present text, so that, upon the whole, we have good reason to rely upon our present "Iliad" as essentially the same with that which was used and read in the family of Pisistratus.

333—This is the main year (at least it is the inaugurating year) of Alexander's Persian expedition; and probably the year in which his tutor, Aristotle, published those notions about the tragic and epic "*unities*," which have since had so remarkable effect upon the arrangement of the "Iliad." In particular, the notion of "episodes," or digressional narratives, interwoven parenthetically with the principal narrative, was entirely Aristotelian, and was explained and regulated by him; and under that notion, people submitted easily to interpolations in the text of the "Iliad," which would else have betrayed themselves for what they are.

320—Alexander the Great dies.

280—The Alexandrian Library is applied to the searching revision of Homer; and a school of Alexandrian critics (in which school, through three consecutive generations, flourished, as its leaders, Zenodotus, Aristophanes, and Aristarchus) dedicated themselves to Homer. They are usually called the Alexandrian "*grammatici*;" which word "*grammatici*," as I have explained some scores of times, did not express so limited a notion as that of *grammarians*, but was the orthodox mode of indicating classically those whom the French call *litterateurs*, and we English less compactly call *men of letters*.

down to 160

After the era of 160 B.C., by which time the Second (which is in effect the only great) Punic War had liberated Rome from her African rival, the Grecian or eastern states of the Mediterranean began rapidly to fall under Roman conquest. Henceforwards the text of Homer suffered no further disturbance or inquisition, until it reached that little wicked generation (ourselves and our immediate fathers) which I have the honour to address. Now, let us turn from the "Iliad" viewed in its chronological series of fortunes, to the "Iliad" viewed in itself and its relations; *i. e.*, in reference to its author, to its Grecian propagators, to its reformers or restorers, its re-casters or interpolators, and its critical explorers.

A.—Homer.

About the year 1797, Messrs Pitt and Harry Dundas laboured under the scandal of sometimes appearing drunk in the House of Commons; and on one particular evening this impression was so strong against them, that the morning papers of the following three days fired a salute of exactly one hundred-and-one epigrams on the occasion. One was this:—

> Pitt.—I cannot see the Speaker, Hal—can *you?*
> Dund.—Not see the Speaker! D—m'e, I see two.

Thus it has happened to Homer. Some say, "There never was such a person as Homer."—"No such person as Homer! On the contrary," say others, "there were scores." This latter hypothesis has much more to plead for itself than the other. Numerous Homers were postulated with some apparent reason, by way of accounting for the numerous Homeric poems, and numerous Homeric birth-places. One man, it was felt, never could be equal to so many claims. Ten camel-loads of poems you may see

ascribed to Homer in the "Bibliotheca Græca" of Fabricius; and more states than seven claimed the man. These claims, it is true, would generally have vanished, if there had been the means of critically probing them; but still there was a *primâ facie* case made out for believing in a plurality of Homers; whilst, on the other hand, for denying Homer, there never was any but a verbal reason. The Polytheism of the case was natural; but the Atheism was monstrous. Ilgen, in the preface to his edition of the Homeric Hymns, says, "Homeri nomen, si recte video, derivandum est ex ὁμου et αρω." And so, because the name (like many names) can be made to yield a fanciful emblematic meaning, Homer must be a myth. But, in fact, Mr Ilgen has made little advance towards a settlement, if that was what he aimed at, with his ὁμα αρω. What do the words mean? Αρω is to join, to fit, to adapt—ὁμα is together, or in harmony. But such a mere outline or schematism of an idea may be filled up under many different constructions. One critic, for instance, understands it in the sense of dovetailing, or metaphorical cabinet-making, as if it applied chiefly to the art of uniting words into metrical combinations. Another—viz., Mr Ilgen himself—takes it quite differently; it describes not the poetical composition, or any labour whatever of the poet as a poet, but the skill of the musical accompaniment and adaptations. Homer means the man that put together, or fitted into concert, the words and the music—the *libretto* of the opera and its fine Mozartian accompaniment. By accident the poet may chance to be also the musical reciter of the poem; and in that character he may have an interest in this name of Ὁμηρος, but not as a poet. Ὁμηρειν and ὁμηρευειν, says Hesychius, mean συμφωνειν (to harmonise in point of sound); the latter of

the two is used in this sense by Hesiod; and more nicely, says Mr Ilgen, it means *accinere*, to sing an accompaniment to another voice or to an instrument; and it means also *succinere*, to sing such an accompaniment in an under-key, or to sing what we moderns call a second—*i. e.*, an arrangement of notes corresponding, but subordinated to the other or leading part. So says Ilgen in mixed Latin, German, and Greek. Now, I also have my pocket theory. I maintain that ὁμε αρω is Greek for packing up. And my view of the case is this—"Homer" was a sort of Delphic or prophetic name given to the poet, under a knowledge of that fate which awaited him in Crete, where, if he did not pack up any trunk that has yet been discovered, he was, however, himself packed up in the portmanteau of Lycurgus. Such, at least, is the colouring which the credulous Plutarch, nine hundred years after Lycurgus, gives to the story. "Man alive!" says a German, apostrophising this thoughtless Plutarch, how could Lycurgus make a shipment of Homer's poems in the shape of a parcel for importation, unless there were written copies in Crete at a time when nobody could write? Or, how, why, and for what intelligible purpose, could he have consigned this bale to a house in the Peloponnesus—viz., *Somebody & Co.*—when notoriously neither *Somebody* nor *Co.* could read? Homer, he thinks, could be imported at that period only in the shape of an orchestra, as a band of Homeric chanters. But, returning seriously to the name Ομηρος, I say that, were this name absolutely bursting with hieroglyphic life, *that* would be no proof that the man Homer, instead of writing a considerable number of octavo volumes, was (to use Mr Ilgen's uncivil language) "an abstract idea." Decent people's children are not to be treated as "abstract ideas," because

their names may chance to look allegoric. Bunyan's "Mr Ready-to-sink" might seem suspicious in offering himself for a life-insurance; but Mr Strong-i'-th'-arm, who would have been a desirable companion for such an exhausted gentleman, is no abstract idea at all; he is, to my personal knowledge, a broad-shouldered reality in a most celebrated street of London, liable to bills, duns, and other affections of our common humanity. Suppose, therefore, that Homer, in some one of his names, really *had* borne a designation glancing at a symbolical meaning, what of that? this should rather be looked upon as a reflex name, artificially constructed for expressing and reverberating his glory after it had gathered, than as any predestinating (and so far marvellous) name. Chrysostom, for instance, that eloquent father of early Christianity, had he been baptised by such a name as golden-mouthed (Chrysostomos), you would have suspected for one of Mr Ilgen's "abstract ideas;" but, as it happens, we all know that he existed in the body; and that the appellation by which he is usually recognised was a name of honour conferred upon him by the public in commemoration of his eloquence. However, I will bring this point to a short issue, by drawing the reader's attention to the following case: Any man, who has looked into the body of Greek rhetoricians, must know that, in that *hebdomas idearum*, or septenary system of rhetorical forms which Hermogenes and many others illustrated, two of the seven (and the foremost two) were the qualities called *gorgotes* and *deinotes*. Now, turn to the list of early Greek rhetoricians or popular orators, and who stands first? Chronologically, the *very* first is a certain Tisias, perhaps; but he is a mere *nominis umbra*. The first who made himself known to the literature of Greece is *Gorgias*; that Gorgias who visited Athens in the days of Socrates (see

Athenæus, for a rigorous examination of the date assigned to that visit by Plato); the same Gorgias from whose name Plato has derived a title for one of his dialogues. Again, amongst the early Greek orators, you will see *Deinarchus.* Gorgias and Deinarchus! Who is there but would say, were it not that these men had flourished in the meridian light of Athenian literature—"Here we behold two ideal or symbolic orators typifying the qualities of *gorgotes* and *deinotes!*" But a stronger case still is that of Demosthenes. Were this great orator not (by comparison with Homer) a modern person, under the full blaze of history, and co-eval with Alexander the Great, 333 years B.C., who is there that would not pronounce him a mere allegoric man, upon reflecting that the name was composed of these two elements—*Demos,* the "people" in its most democratic expression, and *sthenos,* "strength?" this last word having been notoriously used by Homer *(mega sthenos Okeanoio)* to express that sort of power which makes itself known by thundering sound, "the thundering strength of the people!" or, "*the people's fulminating might!*"*—who would believe that the most potent of Greek orators had actually brought with him into his cradle this ominous and magnificent name, this natural patent of precedency to the Athenian hustings? It startles us to find lurking in any man's name a prophecy of his after career; as, for instance, to find a Latin legend—

—"*And his glory shall be from the Nile*" *(Est honor à Nilo),* concealing itself in the name *Horatio Nelson.*† But *there* the prophecy lies hidden, and cannot be extracted without a painful corkscrew process of anagram. Whereas,

* Which (to borrow Milton's grand words from "Paradise Regained")

"Thunder'd over Greece
To Macedon and Artaxerxes' throne."

† A still more startling (because more complex) anagram is found in

in *Demosthenes*, the handwriting is plain to every child: it seems witchcraft—and a man is himself alarmed at his own predestinating name. Yet, for all that, with Mr Ilgen's permission, Demosthenes was not an "abstract idea." Consequently, had Homer brought his name in his waistcoat-pocket to the composition of the "Iliad," he would still not have been half as mythical in appearance as several well-authenticated men, decent people's sons, who have kicked up an undeniable dust on the Athenian hustings. Besides, the word *Homer* has other significant or symbolising senses. It means a hostage; it means a blind man, as much as a cabinet-maker, or even as a packer of trunks. Many of these "significant names" either express accidents of birth commonly recurring—such as *Benoni*, "the child of sorrow," a name frequently given by young women in Westmoreland to any child born under circumstances of desertion, sudden death, &c., on the part of the father—or express those qualities which are always presumable in woman by the courtesy of the human race. Honour, Prudence, Patience, &c., as common female names: or, if they imply anything special, any peculiar determination of general qualities that never could have been foreseen, in that case they must be referred to an admiring posterity—that *senior* posterity which was such for Homer, but for us has long ago become a worshipful ancestry.

From the name it is a natural step to the country. All the world knows, by means of a satirical couplet, that

> "Seven cities claim'd the mighty Homer dead,
> Through which that Homer, living, begg'd his bread."

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the words *Revolution Française:* for if (as was said in 1800, after Marengo), from those two words, involving nineteen letters, you subtract the king's VETO (viz., exactly those four letters), in that case there will remain—*Un Corse la finira.*

What were the names of these seven cities (and islands) I can inform the reader by means of an old Latin couplet amongst my schoolboy recollections—

"Smyrna, Chios, Colophon, Salamis, Rhodos, Argos, Athenæ,
Orbis de patriâ certat, Homere, tuâ."

"Smyrna, &c., nay the whole world, contends for the honour of thy nativity, O Homer."

Among these, the two first, Smyrna and Chios, have very superior pretensions. Had Homer been passed to his parish as a vagrant, or had Colophon (finding a settlement likely to be obtained by his widow) resolved upon trying the question, she might probably have quashed any attempt to make the family chargeable upon herself. But Smyrna lies under strong suspicion; the two rivers from which Homer's immediate progenitors were named—the *Mæon* and the *Meles*—bound the plains close to Smyrna. And Wood insists much upon the perfect correspondence of the climate in that region of the Levant with each and all of Homer's atmospherical indications. I suspect Smyrna myself, and quite as much as Mr Wood; but still I hesitate to charge any local idiosyncrasy upon the Smyrniote climate that could nail it in an action of damages. Gay and sunny, pellucid in air and water, I am sure that Smyrna is; in short, everything that could be wished by the public in general, or by currant-dealers in particular. But really that any city whatever, in that genial quarter of the Mediterranean, should pretend to a sort of patent for sunshine, looks very much like an extract from a private letter to the marines.

Meantime these seven places are far from being all the competitors that have entered their names with the clerk of the course. Homer has been pronounced a Syrian, which name in early Greece of course included the He-

brew, the Syrian proper, the Arab, and the Idumean; and so the "Iliad" may belong to the synagogue. Babylon, also, dusky Babylon, has put in her claim to Homer; so has Egypt. And thus, if the poet were really derived from an oriental race, his name (sinking the aspiration) may have been *Omar*. But those oriental pretensions are mere bubbles, exhaling from national vanity. The place which, to my thinking, lies under the heaviest weight of suspicion as the seat of Homer's connections, and very often of his own residence, is the island of Crete. Smyrna, I doubt not, was his birth-place. But in those summer seas, quiet as lakes, and basking in everlasting sunshine, it would be inevitable for a stirring animated mind to float up and down the Ægean. "Home-keeping youths had ever homely wits," says a great poet of our own; and I doubt not that Homer (if able to afford it) had a yacht, in which he visited all the festivals of the Ægean Islands. Thus he acquired that learned eye which he manifests for female beauty. *Rodo-dactylus*, "rosy-fingered;" *arguro-peza*, "silver-footed;" *bathukolpos*, "full-bosomed;" *boöpis*, "ox-eyed," with a large vocabulary of similar notices, show how widely Homer had surveyed the different chambers of Grecian beauty; for it has happened, through accidents of migration and consequent modifications of origin, combined with varieties of diet and customs, that the Greek Islands still differ greatly in the style of their female beauty.* Now, the time for seeing the young women of a Grecian city, all congregated under the happiest circumstances of display, was in their local festivals.

* For instance, the Athenian females, even when mature women, seemed still girls in their graceful slenderness: they were, in modern French phrase, *svelles*. But the Bœotian, even whilst yet young girls, seemed already mature women, fully developed.

Many were the fair Phidiacan* forms which Homer had beheld moving like goddesses through the mazes of religious choral dances. But at the islands of Ios, of Chios, and of Crete, in particular, I am satisfied that he had a standing invitation. To this hour, the Cretan life presents us with the very echo of the Homeric delineations. Take four several cases:—

1. The old Homeric superstition, for instance, which connects horses by the closest sympathy, and even by prescience, with their masters—that superstition which Virgil has borrowed from Homer in his beautiful episode of Mezentius (*Rhœbe diu*, res si qua diu mortalibus ulla est, Viximus)—still lingers unbroken in Crete. Horses foresee the fates of riders who are doomed, and express their prescience by weeping in a human fashion. The horses of Achilles weep, in "Iliad" xvii., on seeing Automedon, their beloved driver, prostrate on the ground. With this view of the horse's capacity, it is singular, that in Crete this animal by preference should be called το αλογον, the brute, or irrational creature. But the word ἱππος has, by some accident, been lost in the modern Greek. As an instance both of the disparaging name, and of the ennobling superstition, take the following stanza from a Cretan ballad of 1825, written in the modern Greek:—

"Ωντεν εχαβάλλικευε,
Εκλαιε τ' αλογο του.
Και τοτεσα το εγνωρισε
Πως ειναι ὁ θανατος του."

"Upon which he mounted, and his horse wept; and then he saw clearly how this should bode his death."

* From the expression of *Phidiaca manu*—used by Horace—we learn that the adjective, derived from Phidias, the immortal architect and sculptor, was *Phidiacus*.

Under the same old Cretan faith, Homer, in "Iliad" xvii. 437, says—

"Δακρυα δε σφι.
Θερμα κατα βλεφαρων χαμαδις ῥεε μυρομενοιϊν
Ἡνιοχοιο ποθῃ."

"Tears, scalding tears, trickled to the ground down the eyelids of them (the horses), fretting through grief for the loss of their charioteer."

2. Another almost decisive record of Homer's familiarity with Cretan life, lies in his notice of the *agrimi*, a peculiar wild goat, or ibex, found in no part of the Mediterranean world, whether island or mainland, except in Crete. And it is a case almost without a parallel in literature, that Homer should have sent down to all posterity, in sounding Greek, the most minute measurement of this animal's horns, which measurement corresponds with all those recently examined by English travellers, and in particular with three separate pairs of these horns brought to England about the year 1836 by Mr Pashley, the learned Mediterranean traveller of Trinity College, Cambridge. Mr Pashley, at present (viz., in 1857) a barrister of philosophic as well as high forensic pretensions, has since published his travels, and from him I extract the following description of these shy but powerful animals, furnished to Mr Pashley by a Cretan mountaineer:—"The *agrimia* are so active, that they will leap *up* a perpendicular rock of ten to fourteen feet high. They spring from precipice to precipice; and bound along with such speed, that no dog would be able to keep up with them, even on better ground than that where they are found. The sportsman must never be to windward of them, or they will perceive his approach long before he comes within musket-shot. They often carry off a ball; and, unless they fall immediately on being struck, are mostly lost to the sportsman,

although they may have received a mortal wound. They are commonly found two, three, or four together; sometimes a herd of eight, and even nine, is seen. They are always larger than the common goat. In the winter time they may be tracked by the sportsman in the snow. It is common for men to perish in the chase of them" (in that respect resembling the chamois-hunter of the Alps). "They are of a reddish colour, and never black or particoloured like the common goat. The number of prominences on each horn indicates the years of the animal's age."

Now Homer, in "Iliad" iv. 105, on occasion of Pandarus drawing out his bow, notices it as an interesting fact, that this bow, so beautifully polished, was derived from (the horns of) a wild goat, *αιγος αγριου*; and the epithet by which he describes this wild creature is *ιξαλος*—preternaturally agile. In his Homeric manner he adds a short digressional history of the fortunate shot from a secret ambush, by which Pandarus had himself killed the creature. From this it appears that, before the invention of gunpowder, men did not think of chasing the Cretan ibex, so hopeless was the prospect of success; and from the circumstantiality of the account, it is evident that special honour attached to the sportsman who had succeeded in such a capture. He closes with the measurement of the horns in this memorable line (memorable as preserving such a fact for three thousand years)—

"*Του κερα εκ κεφαλης εκκαιδεκα δωρα πεφυκει.*"

"The horns from this creature's head measured sixteen *dora* in length."

Ay; but what is a *doron*? In the Venetian "Scholia," some annotator had hit the truth, but had inadvertently used a wrong word. This word, an oversight, was

viewed as such by Heyne, who corrected it accordingly before any scholar had seen the animal. The *doron* is now ascertained to be a Homeric expression for the *palm*, or sixth part of a Grecian foot; and thus the extent of the horns, in that specimen which Pandarus had shot, would be two feet eight inches. Now the casual specimens sent to Cambridge by Mr Pashley (not likely to be quite so select as that which formed a personal weapon for a man of rank), were all two feet seven and a-half inches on the outer margin, and two feet one and a-half inches on the inner. And thus the accuracy of Homer's account (which, as Heyne observes, had been greatly doubted in past ages) was not only remarkably confirmed, but confirmed in a way which at once identifies, beyond all question, the Homeric wild-goat (*αἰξ ἀγρίος*) with the present *agrimi* of Crete—viz., by the unrivalled size of the animal's horns, and by the unrivalled agility of the animal's movements, which rendered it necessary, in days before the discovery of powder, to shoot it from an ambush.

But this result becomes still more conclusive for my present purpose—viz., for identifying Homer himself as in some measure a Cretan by his habits of life—when I mention the scientific report from Mr Rothman of Trinity College, Cambridge, on the classification and *habitat* of the animal:—"It is not," he says, "the *bouquetin*" (of the Alps), "to which, however, it bears considerable resemblance, but the real wild-goat, the *capra ægagrus*" (Pallas), "the supposed origin of all our domestic varieties. The horns present the anterior trenchant edge characteristic of this species. The discovery of the *ægagrus* in Crete is perhaps a fact of some zoological interest; *as it is the first well-authenticated European locality of this animal.*"

Here is about as rigorous a demonstration, emanating

from Mr Pashley, the Greek archæologist, that the sporting adventure of Pandarus must have been a Cretan adventure, as would be required by the same Mr Pashley, barrister (and by this time I hope Q.C.) in the Court of Queen's Bench. Whilst the spirited delineation of the capture, in which every word is emphatic, and picturesquely true to the very life of 1841,* indicates pretty strongly that Homer had participated in such modes of sporting himself.

3. Another argument for the Cretan habitudes of Homer is derived from his allusion to the Cretan tumblers—the κυβιστητῆρες—the most whimsical, perhaps, in the world; and to this hour the practice continues unaltered as in pre-Homeric days. The description is easily understood. Two men place themselves side by side; one stands upright in his natural posture; the other stands on his head. Of course, this latter would be unable to keep his feet aloft, and in the place belonging to his head, were it not that his comrade throws his arms round his ankles, so as to sustain his legs inverted in the air. Thus placed, they begin to roll forward, head over heels, and heels over head; every tumble inverts their positions; but always there is one man, after each roll, standing upright on his pins, and another whose lower extremities are presented to the clouds. And thus they go on for hours. The performance obviously requires two associates; or, if the number were increased, it must still be by pairs; and accordingly, Homer describes *his* tumblers as in the dual number.

4. A fourth, and most remarkable, among the Homeric

* 1841—viz., the date of publication for this little essay in its earliest form.

mementoes of Cretan life, is the τηλολαλια—or conversation from a distance. This it is, and must have been, which suggested to Homer his preternatural male voices—Stentor's, for instance, who spoke as loud "as other fifty men;" and that of Achilles, whom Antilochus roused up with a long pole, like a lion couchant in his lair, to come out and roar at the Trojans; simply by which roar he scares the whole Trojan army. Now, in Crete (and from Colonel Leake, it appears, in Albania, where I believe that all the emigrant settlers are Cretan), shepherds and others are found with voices so resonant, aided, perhaps, by the quality of a Grecian atmosphere, that they are able to challenge a person "out of sight;" and will actually conduct a ceremonious conversation (for all Cretan mountaineers are as ceremonious as the Homeric heroes) at distances which to us seem incredible. What distances? demands the litigious reader. Why, our own countrymen, modest and veracious, decline to state in punctilious arithmetical terms, what they have not measured, or even had full means of computing. They content themselves with saying, that sometimes their guide, from the midst of a solitary valley, would shout aloud to the European public in general—taking his chance of any strollers from that great body, though quite out of sight, chancing to be within mouth-shot. But the French are not so scrupulous. M. Zallony, in his "Voyage à l'Archipel," says, that some of the Greek islanders "ont la voix forte et animée; et deux habitans, à une distance d'une demi-lieue, même plus, peuvent très facilement s'entendre, et quelquefois s'entretenir." Now a royal league is hard upon three English miles, and a sea league, I believe, is two and a-half; so that half-a-league, *et même plus*, would bring us near to a mile and a-half, or twelve furlongs, which seems a long interval at

which to conduct a courtship. Yet possibly not. Some forty years back, a witness, under examination at the York Assizes, being asked by the presiding judge how he came to think that the defendant was making love to a lady concerned in the action, replied, because he talked to her *in italics*. Now the hint in this precedent would suggest to any of us, when making love at Cretan distances, the propriety of talking to the lady *in capitals*. In Crete, meantime, and again, no doubt, from atmospheric advantages, the τηλοσκοπια, or power of descrying remote objects by the eye, is carried to an extent that, were it not countenanced by modern experience, would seem drawn from a fairy tale. This faculty also may be called Homeric; for Homer repeatedly alludes to it.

5. But the legends and mythology of Crete are what most detect the intercourse of Homer with that island. A volume would be requisite for the full illustration of this truth. It will be sufficient here to remind the reader of the early civilisation, long anterior to that of Greece continental, which Crete had received. That premature refinement of itself furnishes an *à priori* argument for supposing that Homer would resort to Crete; and inversely, the elaborate Homeric use of Cretan traditions furnishes an *à posteriori* argument that Homer *did* seek this island.

Let me not be thought by the courteous and malicious reader to be travelling into extrajudicial questions. It is of great use towards any full Homeric investigation, that we should fix Homer's locality and trace his haunts; for locality, connected with the internal indications of the "Iliad," is the best means of approximating to Homer's true era; as, on the other hand, Homer's era, if otherwise deduced, would assist the indications of the "Iliad" to

determine his locality. And if any reader demands, in a spirit of mistrust, how it is that Crete, so harassed by intestine wars from Turkish, Venetian, and recently from Egyptian tyranny, the bloodiest and most exterminating, has been able, through three thousand years, to keep up unbroken her inheritance of traditions, I reply, that the same cause has protected the Cretan usages, which (since the days of our friend Pandarus) has protected the Cretan ibex—viz., the physical conformation of the island—its mountains; its secret passes, where one resolute band of two hundred men is equal to an army; ledges of rock which a mule cannot tread with safety; crags where even infantry must break and lose their cohesion; and, above all, the blessedness of rustic poverty, which offers no temptation to the marauder. These have been the Cretan safeguards; and a brave Sfakian population, by many degrees the finest of all Grecian races in their persons and their hearts.

The main point about Homer the man which now remains to be settled, amongst the many that are desirable, and the few that are hopeful, is this—*Could he write?* and if he could, did he use that method for fixing his thoughts and images as they arose, or did he trust to his own memory for the rough sketch, and to the chanters for publishing the revised copies?

This question, however, as it will again meet us under the head *Solon and the Pisistratidæ*, I will defer to that section; and I will close this personal section on Homer by one remark borrowed from Plato. The reader will have noticed that, amongst the cities pretending to Homer as a native child, stands the city of Argos. Now Plato, by way of putting a summary end to all such windy pretensions from Dorian cities, introduces in one of his dialogues a stran-

ger, who remarks, as a leading characteristic of Homer, that everywhere he keeps the reader moving amongst scenes, images, and usages, which reflect the forms and colouring of IONIAN life. This remark is important.

THE "ILIAD."

What is the "Iliad" about? What is the true and proper subject of the "Iliad?" If that could be settled, it would facilitate our inquiry. Now everybody knows, that, according to the ordinary notion, founded upon the opening lines of this poem, the subject is the *Wrath of Achilles.* Others, however, have thought, with some reason, that this idea was not sufficiently self-diffusive—was not all-pervasive: it seemed a ligament that passed through some parts of the poem, and connected them intimately, but missed others altogether. It has, therefore, become a serious question—How much of the "Iliad" is really intervcined, or at all modified, by the son of Peleus, and his feud with Agamemnon?

Thus far, at any rate, we must concede to the *Chorizontes,* or breakers-up of the "Iliad," that the original stem on which the "Iliad" grew was probably an "Achilleis;" for it is inconceivable that Homer himself could have expected such a rope of sand as the "Iliad" *now* presents, to preserve its order and succession under the rough handling of posterity. Watch the fate of any intricate machine in any private family. All the loose or detached parts of such a machine are sure to be lost. Ask for it at the end of a year, and the more elaborate was the machine, so much the more certain is the destruction which will have overtaken it. It is only when any compound whole, whether engine, poem, or tale, carries its several parts absolutely interlocked with its own

substance, that it has a chance of maintaining its integrity.

Now, certainly it cannot be argued by the most idolatrous lover of the "Iliad," that the main central books exhibit that sort of natural intercohesion which *determines* their place and order. But, says the reader, here they are: they *have* held together: no use in asking whether it was natural for them to hold together. They *have* reached us: it is now past asking—Could Homer expect them to reach us? Yes, they *have* reached us: but since when? Not, probably, in their present arrangement, from an earlier period than that of Pisistratus. When manuscripts had once become general, it might be easy to preserve even the loosest succession of parts—especially where great veneration for the author, and the general notoriety of the poems, would secure the fidelity of copies. But what the sceptics require to be enlightened upon, is the principle of cohesion which could carry these loose parts of the "Iliad" over that gulf of years between Homer and Pisistratus—the one a whole millennium before our Christian era, the other little more than half a millennium; and whilst traditionary transmission through singers and harpers constituted, perhaps, the sole means of preservation, and therefore of arrangement.

Let not the reader suppose German scepticism to be the sole reason for jealousy with regard to the present canon of the "Iliad." On the contrary, *some* interpolations are confessed by all parties. For instance, it is *certain*—and even Eustathius records it as a regular tradition in Greece—that the night adventure of Diomed and Ulysses against the Trojan camp, their capture of the beautiful horses brought by Rhesus, and of Dolon the Trojan spy, did not originally form a part of the "Iliad." At present

this adventure forms the tenth book, but previously it had been an independent *epos*, or epic narrative, perhaps locally circulated amongst the descendants of Diomed,* and known by the title of the "Doloneia." Now, if one such intercalation could pass, why not more? With respect to this particular night episode, it has been remarked that its place in the series is not asserted by any *internal* indication. There is an allusion, indeed, to the wrath of Achilles; but probably introduced to harmonise it as a part of the "Iliad," by the same authority which introduced the poem itself: else, the whole book may be dropped out without any *hiatus*. The battle, suggested by Diomed at the end of the ninth book, takes place in the eleventh; and, as the critics remark, no allusion is made in that eleventh book, by any of the Grecian chiefs, to the remarkable plot of the intervening night.

But of all the incoherences which have been detected in the "Iliad," as arising out of arbitrary juxtapositions between parts not originally related, the most amusing is that brought to light by the late Wilhelm Mueller. "It is a fact," says he, "that (as the arrangement now stands) Ulysses is not ashamed to attend three dinner parties on

* *Descendants*, or, perhaps, amongst the worshippers; for, though everybody is not aware of that fact, many of the Grecian heroes at Troy were deified. Ulysses and his wife, Idomeneus, &c., assume even a mystical place in the subsequent superstitions of Greece. But Diomed also became a god: and the occasion was remarkable. A peerage (*i. e.*, a godship) had been promised by the gods to his father Tydeus; but when the patent came to be enrolled, a flaw was detected—it was found that Tydeus had once eaten part of a man! What was to be done? The objection was fatal; no cannibal could be a god, though a god might be a cannibal. Tydeus, therefore, requested Jove to settle the reversion on his son Diomed. Which arrangement was finally adopted. I would beg the reader to notice, by the way, that this very capacity of apotheosis presupposes a venerable antiquity in its subjects receding far from the vulgarising approaches of familiarity.

one evening." First, he had a dinner engagement with Agamemnon, which, of course, he keeps [B. ix. 90]; so prudent a man could not possibly neglect an invitation from the commander of the forces. Even in free and independent England, the sovereign does not *ask* you to dinner, but *commands* your attendance. Next, this gormandising Ulysses dines with Achilles [B. ix. 221]; and finally with Diomed [B. xi. 578]. Now, Diomed was a swell of the first magnitude, a man of fashion and a dandy, as may be seen in the "Troilus and Cressida" of Shakspere (who took his character from tradition, and in making him the Greek rival of Troilus, unavoidably makes him an accomplished man). He, therefore, pushes his dinner as far towards "to-morrow" as was well possible; so that it is near morning before that dinner is over. And the sum of the Ithacan's enormities is thus truly stated by Mueller:—"Deny it who will, the son of Laertes accepts three distinct feeds, between the sunset, suppose, of Monday and the dawn of Tuesday!"

This is intolerable. Yet, perhaps, apologists will say (for some people will varnish anything), "If the man had three dinners in one day, often, perhaps, in three days he had but one dinner!" For myself I frankly confess, that if there is one man in the Grecian camp whom I should have believed capable of such a thing, it is precisely this reptile Ulysses. Mueller insists on calling him the "noble" Ulysses; but, to my thinking, his nearest representative in modern times is "Sixteen-string Jack," whose life may be read in the "Newgate Calendar." What most amuses myself in the business, is Mueller's steady pursuit of Ulysses through two books of the "Iliad," in order to watch how many dinner parties he attended! And there is a good moral in the whole discovery; for it shows all knaves that,

though hidden for three thousand years, their tricks are sure to be found out at the last.

In general, it is undeniable that some of the German objections to the present arrangement, as a possible Homeric arrangement, are valid. For instance, the following, against the present position of the duel between Paris and Menelaus:—"This duel, together with the perfidious shot of Pandarus, and the general engagement which follows, all belonging to the same *epos*, wear the appearance of being perfectly insulated where they now stand, and betray no sort of connection with any of the succeeding cantos. In the Ἀριστεια Διομηδους, which forms the fifth canto, the whole incident is forgotten, and is never revived. The Grecians make no complaint of the treachery practised; nor do the gods (*ex officio* the avengers of perjury) take any steps to punish it. Not many hours after the duel, Hector comes to his brother's residence; but neither of them utters one word about the recent duel; and as little about what had happened since the duel, though necessarily unknown to Paris. Hector's reproaches, again, to Paris, for his *lâcheté* are in manifest contradiction to the trial of gallantry involved in the single combat which he had so recently faced. Yet Paris takes no notice whatever of the energy manifested by himself. And as to his final evasion, *that* was no matter of reproach to him, since it was the irresistible work of a goddess. Besides, when he announces his intention to Hector of going again to the field of battle, who would not anticipate from him a proposal for re-establishing the interrupted duel? Yet not a syllable of all that. Now, with these broad indications to direct our eyes upon the truth, can we doubt that the duel, in connection with the breach of truce, and all that now fills the third and fourth books" (in a foot-note Mueller adds—"and also the former

half of the second book") "originally composed an independent *epos*, which belonged, very probably, to an earlier stage of the Trojan war, and was first thrust, by the authorised arrangers of the 'Iliad,' into the unhappy place it now occupies—viz., in the course of a day already far overcrowded with events?"

In the notes, where Mueller replies to some objections, he again insists upon the impossibility, under the supposition that Homer had authorised the present arrangement, of his never afterwards making the Greeks allude to the infraction of the treaty; especially when Hector proposes a second duel between himself and some one of the Grecian chiefs. Yet, perhaps, as regards this particular feature—viz., the treachery—of the duel, it might be suggested, that, as the interposition of Venus is not to be interpreted in any foolish allegorical way (for the battle interferences of the gods are visible and undisguised), doubtless the Greeks, not less than the Trojans, understood the interruption as in effect divine; after which, the act of Pandarus is covered by that general apology, no matter in what light Pandarus might have meant it. Even in the first "Iliad," it is most childish to understand the whispering of Minerva to Achilles as an allegorical way of expressing that his good sense or his prudence arrested his hand. Nonsense! that is not Homer's style of thinking, nor the style of Homeric ages. Where Mars, upon being wounded, howls, and, instead of licking the man who offered him this insult, shows the white feather and limps off in confusion, do these critics imagine an allegory? What is an allegoric howl? or what does a cur sneaking from a fight indicate symbolically? The Homeric simplicity speaks plainly enough. Venus finds that her man is likely to be beaten; which, by the way, surprises us; for a stout young shep-

herd, like Paris, ought to have found no trouble in taking the "conceit"—or (speaking in fresher slang) the "bounce" —out of an elderly diner-out, such as Menelaus. And, perhaps, with his mauleys, he would; but with the scimitar and spear a shepherd like Paris, trained upon Mount Ida, was naturally not familiar. Finding, however, how the affair was likely to go, Venus withdraws her man. Paris does not come to time; the umpires quarrel; the mob breaks the ring; and a battle-royal ensues. But the interference of Venus must have been palpable; and this is one of the circumstances in the "Iliad" which satisfies me that the age of Troy was removed by several generations from the age of Homer. To elder days, and to men fancied more heroic than those of his own day (a fancy which Homer expressly acknowledges—viz., in valuing the paving-stones interchanged between Telamonian Ajax and his antagonists), he might find himself inclined to ascribe a personal intercourse with the gods; and he would meet everywhere an audience favouring this belief. A generation of men that often rose themselves to divine honours, might readily be conceived to mix personally with the gods. But no man could think thus of his own contemporaries, of whom he must know that the very best were liable to indigestion, and suspected often to have schirrous livers. Really no: a dyspeptic demigod it makes one dyspeptic to think of!

Meantime, the duel of Paris is simply overlooked and neglected in the subsequent books of the "Iliad:" it is nowhere absolutely contradicted by implication: but other cases have been noticed in the "Iliad," which involve direct contradictions: these, therefore, argue either that Homer in those "naps" which Horace imputes to him slumbered too profoundly, or that counterfeits got mixed

up with the true bullion of the "Iliad." Amongst other examples pointed out by Heyne or by Franceson, the following deserve notice:—

1. Pylæmenes the Paphlagonian is killed by Menelaus (Il. v. 579–590), but further on (Il. xiii. 643–658) we find the poor man pretty well in his health, and chief mourner at the funeral of his son Harpalion.

2. Sarpedon is wounded in the leg by Tlepolemus (Il. v. 628, &c.), and an ugly wound it is, for the bone is touched, so that an operation might be looked for. Operation indeed! Two days after, he is stumping about upon the wounded pin, and "operating" upon other people (Il. xii. 290, &c.) The contradiction, if it really is one, was not found out until the approved chronology of the "Iliad" had been settled. My reason for doubting about the contradiction is simply this:—Sarpedon was a son of Jupitor; and Jupiter might have a salve for wounded legs; or else the leg (as in Dean Swift's problem offered to the consideration of the Royal Society) might have been a wooden one, and thus liable to a sudden cure of its very worst fracture by a preparation of hemp.

Teucer, however, was an undeniable mortal. Yet he (Il. viii. 324) is wounded desperately in the arm by Hector. His *neuré* is smashed, which generally is taken to mean his bowstring; but some surgical critics understand it as the sinew of his arm. At all events it was no trifle; his brother, Telamonian Ajax, and two other men, carry off the patient, groaning heavily, probably upon a shutter, to the hospital. He, at least, is booked for the doctor, you think. Not at all. Next morning he is abroad on the field of battle, and at his old trade of thumping respectable men (Il. xii. 387).

4. The history of Vulcan, and his long day's tumble from

the sky, in Il. i. 586, does not harmonise with the account of the same accident in Il. xix. 394.

5. As an inconsistency not in the "Iliad" internally, but between the "Iliad" and the "Odyssey," it has often been noticed, that in the former this same Vulcan is married to Venus, whilst in the "Odyssey" his wife is one of the Graces.

"As upon earth," says Mueller, "so in Olympus, the fable of the 'Iliad' is but loosely put together; and we are not to look for any very severe succession of motives and results, of promises and performances, even amongst the gods. In the first 'Iliad,' Thetis receives a Jovian guarantee—viz., Jove's authentic nod—on behalf of her offended son Achilles, that he will glorify him in a particular way; and the way was by making the Trojans victorious, until the Grecians should see their error, and propitiate the irritated hero. Mindful of his promise, Jove disposes Agamemnon, by a delusive dream, to lead out the Grecian host to battle. At this point, however, Thetis, Achilles, and the ratifying nod, appear at once to be blown entirely out of the Jovian remembrance. The duel between Paris and Menelaus takes place, and the abrupt close of that duel by Venus, apparently with equal indifference on Jove's part to either incident. Even at the general meeting of the gods in the fourth book, there is no renewal of the proposal for the glorifying of Achilles. It is true that Jove, from old attachments, would willingly deliver the stronghold of Priam from ruin, and lead the whole feud to some pacific issue. But the passionate female divinities, Juno and Minerva, triumph over his moderation; and the destruction of Troy is finally determined. Now, grant that Jove wanted firmness for meeting the furious demands of the goddesses, by a candid con-

fession of his previous promise to Thetis, still we might have looked for some intimation that this degradation of himself in the eyes of a confiding suppliant had cost him a struggle. But no; nothing of the kind. In the next great battle the Trojans are severely pressed, and the Greeks are far enough from feeling any regret for the absence of Achilles. Nay, as if expressly to show that Achilles was *not* wanted, Diomed turns out a trump of the first magnitude; and a son of Priam describes him pointedly as more terrific than Pelides, the goddess-born! And, indeed, it was time to retreat before the man who had wounded Mars, making him yell with pain, and howl like "ten thousand mortals." This Mars, however—he at least must have given some check to the advancing Greeks? True, he had so; but not as fulfilling any Jovian counsels, which, on the contrary, tend rather to the issue of this god's being driven out of the Trojan ranks. First of all, in the eighth book, Jove steps forward to guide the course of war; and with remembrance of his promise to Thetis, he forbids peremptorily both gods and goddesses to interfere on either side; and he seats himself on Mount Ida to overlook the field of battle, threatening to the Greeks, by his impartial scales, a preponderance of calamity. From this review, it appears tolerably certain that the third to the seventh book belong to no *epos* that could have been dedicated to the glory of Achilles. The wrath of that hero, his reconciliation, and his return to battle, having been announced in the opening as the theme of the poem, are used as a connecting link for holding together all the cantos about other heroes which had been intercalated between itself and the close; but this tie is far too slack; and one rude shake makes all the alien parts tumble out."

TIME OF THE "ILIAD."

Next let us ask, as a point very important towards investigating the true succession and possible *nexus* of the events, what is the duration—the compass of time—through which the action of the poem revolves? This has been of old a disputed point, and many are the different "diaries" which have been abstracted by able men during the last two centuries. Bossu made the period of the whole to be forty-seven days; Wood (in his earliest edition) forty; and a calculation in the "Memoirs de Trevoux" (May, 1708) carries it up to forty-nine. But the *computus* now finally adopted, amended, and ruled irreversibly, is that of Heyne (as given in a separate "Excursus"), countersigned by Wolf. This makes the number to be fifty-two; but, with a subsequent correction for an obvious oversight of Heyne's, fifty-one.

"Book i.—Nine days the plague rages (v. 53). On the tenth Achilles calls a meeting of the staff-officers. What occurs in that meeting subsequently occasions his mother's visit. She tells him (v. 422) that Jove had set off the day before to a festival of the Ethiopians, and is not expected back in less than twelve days. From this we gather, that the visit of Thetis to Jove (v. 493) must be transplanted to the twenty-first day. With this day terminates the first book, which contains, therefore, twenty-one days.

"Book ii., up to v. 293 of Book vii., comprehends a single day—viz., the twenty-second.

"Book vii. (v. 381, 421, and 432), the twenty-third day.

"Book vii. (v. 433–465), the twenty-fourth day.

"Book viii., up to the close of Book x., the twenty-fifth day and the succeeding night.

"Book xi., up to the close of Book xviii., the twenty-sixth day.

"Book xix., to v. 201 of Book xxiii., the twenty-seventh day, with the succeeding night.

"Book xxiii. (v. 109–225), the twenty-eighth day.

"Book xxiii. (v. 226 to the end), the twenty-ninth day.

"Book xxiv.—Eleven days long Achilles trails the corpse of Hector round the sepulchre of Patroclus. On the twelfth day a meeting is called of the gods; consequently on the thirty-ninth day of the general action; for this indignity to the dead body of Hector must be dated from the day of his death, which is the twenty-seventh of the entire poem. On the same thirty-ninth day, towards evening, the body is ransomed by Priam, and during the night is conveyed to Troy. With the morning of the following day—viz., the fortieth—the venerable king returns to Troy; and the armistice of eleven days, which had been concluded with Achilles, is employed in mourning for Hector during nine days, and in preparing his funeral. On the tenth of these days takes place the burning of the body, and the funeral banquet. On the eleventh is celebrated the solemn interment of the remains, and the raising of the sepulchral mound. With the twelfth recommences the war.

"Upon this deduction, the entire 'Iliad' is found to revolve within the space of fifty-one days. Heyne's misreckoning is obvious: he had summed up the eleven days of the corpse-trailing as a clear addition, by just so much, to the twenty-seven previous days; whereas the twenty-seventh of those days coincides with the first of the trailing, and is thus counted twice over in effect."

This *computus*, in the circumstantial detail here presented, is due to Wilhelm Mueller. But substantially it is guaranteed by numerous scholars. And, as to Heyne's little blunder, corrected by Wolf, it is nothing; for I have

myself known a Quaker, and a celebrated bank, the two select models of accuracy, to make an error of the same amount, in computing the number of days to run upon a bill at six weeks. But I soon "*wolfed*" them into better arithmetic, upon finding that the error was against myself.

NAME OF THE "ILIAD."

What follows I offer as useful towards the final judgment. When first arose the great word, that ever memorable amongst human names—"Ilias," if Greek it is that we are expected to speak; the "Iliad," if English? This is past determination; but so much we know, that the eldest author now surviving, in whom that designation occurs as a regular familiar word, is Herodotus, and he was contemporary with Pericles. Herodotus must be considered as the senior author in that great stage of Athenian literary splendour, as Plato and Xenophon were the junior. Herodotus, therefore, might have seen Hipparchus, the son of Pisistratus, if that prince had not been cut off prematurely by Jacobinical daggers. It is, therefore, probable in a high degree, that the name "Iliad" was already familiar to Pisistratus; first, because it is so used by Herodotus as to imply that it was no novelty to *him* at that time; secondly, because he, who first gathered the entire series of Trojan legends into artificial unity, would be the first to require an expression for that unity. The collector would be the first to want a collective title. Solon, therefore, or Pisistratus, no matter which, did (as I fully believe) first gather the whole cycle of Iliac romances into one body. And to this aggregate whole he gave the name of "Ilias." But why? in what sense? Not for any purpose of deception, small or great. Were that notion once admitted, then we open a door to all sorts of licentious conjecture. Consciously authorising

one falsehood, there is no saying where he would have stopped. But there was no falsehood. Pisistratus, whose original motive for stirring in such an affair could have been only love and admiration, was not the author, but the sworn foe of adulteration. It was to prevent changes, not to sanction them—to bar all frauds, not to promote them—that he could ever have interposed with the state authority. And what, then, did he mean by calling these collected poems the "Iliad?" He meant precisely what a man would now mean, who should publish a body of ancient romances relating to the Round Table of King Arthur, or to Charlemagne, or to the Crusades; not implying, by any unity in the title, that these romances were all one man's work, or several parts of one individual whole, but that they had a common reference to one terminal object. The unity implied would lie not in the mind conceiving, nor in the *nexus* of the several divisions, but in the community of subject. As when we call the five books of Moses by the name of the Pentateuch, we do not assert any unity running through these books, as though one took up the subject where another left it; for, in reality, some parts are purely historical, some purely legislative, some purely ceremonial. But we mean that all, whether record of fact, or record of institution and precept, bear upon one object—viz., the founding a separate nation as the depository of theologic truth, and elaborately, therefore, kept, by countless distinctions in matters originally trivial, from ever blending with Pagans. On the one hand, therefore, I concede to the sceptics, that several independent poems (though still by possibility from the same author) were united by Pisistratus. But, on the other hand, I deny any purpose of fraud in this—I deny that the name "Iliad" was framed to disguise and

mask this independence. Some had a closer *nexus* than others. But what Pisistratus says is this:—Behold a series of poems, all ancient; all from Homeric days; and (whether Homer's or not) all relating to the great crusade against *Ilium*.

Solon and Pisistratus.

What was it, service or injury, that these men did to Homer? No one question, in the whole series of Homeric questions, is more perplexing. Homer did a great service to *them;* if tradition is right, to *both* of them—viz., by settling a legal dispute for each; so that it was a knavish return for such national benefits, if they—if these two Athenian statesmen—went about to undermine that text from which they had reaped such singular fruits in their own administration. But I am sure that they did no such thing: they were both gentlemen, both scholars. Yet something, certainly, they must have done to Homer; in that point all are agreed; but what it was remains a mystery to this hour. Every man is entitled to his opinion; I to mine; which in some corner or other I shall whisper into the private ear of the public, and into the public ear of my private friends.

The first thing which puzzles every man of reflection, when he hears of this anecdote, is—the extraordinary coincidence that two great lawgivers, at different eras, should both interest themselves in a poet; and not only so, but the particular two who faced and confronted each other in the same way that any leader of English civilisation (Alfred, suppose) might be imagined as facing and confronting any leader (Charlemagne, suppose) of French civilisation. For Christian Europe, the names and tutelary powers of France and England are by analogy that same guiding constellation which for Pagan Greece were the

names Sparta and Athens; I mean, as respects the two great features of permanent rivalship and permanent leadership. From the moment when they were regularly organised by law and institutions, Athens and Sparta became the two counterforces—attracting and repelling—of Greece. About 800 B.C., Lycurgus draws up a system of laws for Sparta; more than two centuries later, Solon draws up a correspondent system of laws for Athens. And most unaccountably, each of these political leaders takes upon him, not passively, as a private literary citizen, to admire the Homeric poems—*that* might be natural in men of high birth enjoying the selectest advantages of education—but actually to privilege Homer, to place him on the *matricula* of denizens, to consecrate his name, and to set in motion the whole machinery of government on behalf of his poems. Wherefore, and for what purpose? On the part of Lycurgus, for a purpose well known and appreciated—viz., to use the "Iliad" as the basis of a public education, and thus mediately as the basis of a warlike morality; but, on the part of Solon, for no purpose ever yet ascertained. Strangely enough, from the literary land, and from the later period, we do *not* learn the "how" and the "why;" from the gross illiterate land and the earlier period, we *do*.

What Lycurgus did was rather for an interest of Greece than for any interest of Homer. The order of his thoughts was not, as has been supposed, "I love Homer; and I will show my love by making Sparta co-operate in extending his influence;" not at all; but this—"I love Sparta; and I will show my love by making Homer co-operate with the martial foundations of the land; I will introduce a martial poem like the 'Iliad,' to operate through public education, through national training, and through here-

ditary festivals." For Solon, on the other hand, Homer must have been a final object; no means towards something else, but an end *per se*. Doubtless, Solon as little as Lycurgus could be indifferent to the value of this popular poem for his own professional objects. But, practically, it is not likely that Solon could find any opening for Homeric services in that direction. Precisely those two causes which would insure to Solon a vast superiority to Lycurgus in all modes of intellectual liberality—viz., his chronologic period and his country—must have also caused that the whole ground would be pre-occupied. For education, for popular influence, Athens would have already settled upon Homer all that dowery of distinction which Solon might wish to settle. Polished Athens surely in the sixth century B.C., if brutal Sparta in the ninth.

At this point our suspicions revolve upon us. That the two vanward potentates of Greece—Athens and Sparta—should each severally ascribe to her own greatest lawgiver a separate Homeric labour, looks too much like the Papal heraldries of European sovereigns; amongst whom all the great ones are presumed to have rendered some characteristic service to the Church. "Are you ruler of France, and therefore the *Most Christian?* Be it so; but I again, as King of Spain, am the *Most Catholic;* and my brother here, King of Portugal, is the *Most Faithful;* and this Britannic sovereign is *Defender of the Faith.*" Was Homer, do you say, an Ionian? "Well, be it so," the Spartan replies, "with all my heart: and we Dorians might seem to have no part in that inheritance, being rather asinine in our literary character; but, for all that, Dorian as he was, you cannot deny that my countryman, Lycurgus, first introduced Homer upon the continent of Greece." Indeed the Spartans had a craze about the "Iliad," as though it

bore some special relation to themselves: for Plutarch mentions it as a current doctrine in Sparta—that Hesiod was the poet for Helots (and in a lower key perhaps they added—for some other people beside), since, according to his poetry, the end of man's existence is to plough and to harrow; but Homer, said they, is the Spartan poet, since the moral of the "Iliad" proclaims that the whole duty of man lies in fighting.

Meantime, though it cannot be denied that these attempts in Greek statesmen to connect themselves with Homer by some capital service, certainly *do* look too much like the consequent attempts of western nations (Rome, Britain, &c.) to connect their ancestries with Troy, still there seems to be good historic authority for each of the cases separately. Or, if any case were suspicious, it would be that of Lycurgus. Solon, the legislatorial founder of Athens—the Pisistratidæ, or final princes of Athens—these great men, it is undeniable, *did* link their names with Homer: each and all by specific services. What services? what could be the service of Solon? Or, after Solon, what service *could* remain for Pisistratus?

A fantastic Frenchman pretended to think that history, to be read beneficially, ought to be read backwards—*i. e.*, in an order inverse to the chronological succession of events. This absurd rule might, in the present case, be applied with benefit. Pisistratus and his son Hipparchus stand last in the order of Homeric modifiers. Now, if we ascertain what it was that they *did*, this may show us what it was that their predecessors did *not* do; and to that extent it will narrow the range from which we have to select the probable functions of those predecessors.

What, then, was the particular service to Homer by which Pisistratus and his son made themselves so famous?

The best account of this is contained in an obscure *grammaticus* or *litterateur*, one Diomedes, no small fool, who thus tells his tale:—"The poems of Homer, in process of time, were it by fire, by flood, by earthquake, had come near to extinction; they had not absolutely perished, but they were continually coming nearer to that catastrophe, through wide dispersion. From this dispersion it arose naturally that one place possessed a hundred Homeric books; some second place a thousand; some third place a couple of hundreds; and the Homeric poetry was fast tending to a fractionary state. In that conjuncture there occurred to Pisistratus, who ruled at Athens about 555 years B.C., the following scheme:—With the double purpose of gaining glory for himself and preservation for Homer, he dispersed a notification through Greece, that every man who possessed any Homeric fragments was summoned, or was requested, to deliver them into Athenian hands at a fixed rate of compensation. The possessors naturally hastened to remit their *quotas*, and were honestly paid. Indeed, Pisistratus did not reject even those contributors who presented verses already sent in by another; to these also he paid the stipulated price without any discount at all. And by this means it happened that oftentimes he recovered, amongst a heap of repetitions, one, two, or more verses that were new. At length this stage of the labour was completed; all the returns from every quarter had come in. Then it was that Pisistratus summoned seventy men of letters, at salaries suitable to their pretensions, as critical assessors upon these poems; giving to each man separately a copy of the lines collected, with the commission of arranging them according to his individual judgment. When, at last, the commissioners had closed their labours, Pisistratus reassembled them, and called upon

each man separately to exhibit his own result. This having been done, the general voice, in mere homage to merit and the truth, unanimously pronounced the revisions of Aristarchus and Zenodotus to be the best; and after a second collation between these two, the edition of Aristarchus was found entitled to the palm."

Now, the reader must not allow himself to be repelled by the absurd anachronisms of this account, which brings Pisistratus of the sixth century B.C. face to face with Aristarchus of the third; nor must he allow too much weight to the obvious plagiarism from the old marvellous legend of the seventy-two Jewish translators working upon the Mosaic Pentateuch. That very legend shows him how possible it is for a heap of falsehoods, and even miracles, to be embroidered upon a story which, after all, is true in its main texture. We all know it to be true, in spite of the fables engrafted upon this truth, that, under the patronage of a Macedonian prince, seventy-two learned Jews really *were* assembled at Alexandria, and *did* make that Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures which, from the number *(septuaginta)* of the translators, we still call the *Septuagint.* And so we must suppose this ignorant Diomedes, though embellishing the story according to his slender means, still to have built upon old traditions. Even the rate of payment has been elsewhere recorded; by which it appears that "penny-a-liners" (of whom we hear so much in our day) existed also for early Athens.

If this legend were accurate even in its commencement, it would put down Plato's story, that the Homeric poems were first brought to Athens by Hipparchus, the son of Pisistratus; and it would put down the mere possibility that Solon, thirty or forty years earlier than either, had ever intermeddled with those poems. But, if we adopt the

tradition about Lycurgus, or even if we reject it, we must believe that copies of the "Iliad" and "Odyssey" (that is, *quoad* the substance, not *quoad* the present arrangement) existed in Athens long before the Pisistratidæ, or even before Solon. Were it only through the *rhapsodoi*, or continuous reciters of the Homeric poems, both "Iliad" and "Odyssey" must have been known many a long year before Pisistratus; or else I undertake to say they would never have been known at all. For, in a maritime city like Athens, communicating so freely with Ionia and with all insular Greece, so constitutionally gay besides, how is it possible to suppose that the fine old poetic romances chanted to the accompaniment of harps, about those ancestral Greek heroes whom we may style the *paladins* of Greece, could be unknown or unwelcomed, unless by supposing them non-existent? If they lurked anywhere, they would assuredly float across these sunny seas of the Ægean to Athens; that city which, in every age (according to Milton: "Paradise Regained"), was equally "*native* to famous wits" and "*hospitable*"—that is, equally fertile in giving *birth* to men of genius itself, and forward to welcome those of foreign birth.

Throughout this story of Diomedes, disfigured as it is, we may read that the labours of Pisistratus were applied to *written* copies. That is a great step in advance. And instantly this step reacts upon Solon, as a means of approximating to the nature of *his* labours. If (as one German writer holds) Solon was the very first person to take down the "Iliad" in writing, from the recitations of the *rhapsodoi*, then it would seem that this step had suggested to Pisistratus the further improvement of collating Solon's written copy with such partial copies, or memorials, or fractional recollections of reciters, or local and enchorial legends, as would be likely to exist in many dif-

ferent parts of Greece, amongst families or cities tracing their descent from particular heroes of the "Iliad." If, on the other hand, Pisistratus was the first man who matured a written copy, what will then remain open to Solon for *his* share in the play? This:—viz., that he applied some useful check to the exorbitancies of the musical rehearsers. The famous Greek words, still surviving in Plato, and long after in Diogenes Laertius, support this notion. The words must be true, though they may be obscure. They must involve the fact, though they may conceal it. What are these words? Let us review them. To chant ἐξ ὑποληψεως—and to chant ἐξ ὑπαβολης—these were the new regulations introduced by Solon and his successor. Now, what is the meaning of ὑποληψις? The commonest sense of the word is *opinion*. Thus, on the title-page of Lord Shaftesbury's "Characteristics" stands, as a general motto, Παντα ὑποληψις—"All things are in effect opinion;" *i. e.*, nothing really *is;* but imperfectly it *is*, or it is *not*, according to the hold which it has obtained over the general opinion of men. This, however, is a sense which will not answer. Another and rarer sense is —*succession*. And the way in which the prepositions ὑπο and *sub* are used by the ancients to construct the idea of succession (a problem which Dr Parr failed to solve), is by supposing such a case as the slated roof of a house, Were the slates simply contiguous by their edges, the rain would soon show that their succession was not perfect. But, by making each to underlap the other, the series is made virtually perfect. In this way, the word came to be used for *succession*. Study the mode of succession in cologic Floras. And, applied to the chanters, it must have meant that, upon some great occasion periodically recurring, they were obliged by the new law to pursue the entire series

of the several rhapsodies composing the "Iliad," and not to pick and choose, as heretofore, with a view to their own convenience, or to local purposes. But what was the use of this? I presume that it had the same object in view as the rubric of the English Church (I believe also of the Jewish Synagogue), in arranging the succession of lessons appointed for each day's service—viz., to secure the certainty that, within a known period of time, the *whole* of the canonical books should be read once through from beginning to end. The particular purpose is of my own suggestion; but the fact itself is placed beyond all doubt. Plato says, that the chanters were obliged, at the great Panathenaic festival, to recite the "Iliad" ἐξ ὑπολήψεως ἐφεξῆς; where the one expression applies to the succession of parts recited, and the other to the succession of persons reciting.

The popular translation would be, that they were obliged, by relieving each other, or by regular relays of chanters, to recite the whole poem, in its order, by succession of parts from beginning to end. This very story is repeated by an orator still extant not long after Plato. And in his case there is no opening to doubt; for he does not affirm the story, he assumes it, and recalls it to the people's attention as a thing notorious to them all. The other expression, ἐξ ὑποβολῆς or ὑποβλητὸν, has occasioned some disputing; but why, I cannot conjecture. If ever there was a word whose meaning is certain in a position like this, that word is ὑποβάλλω, with its derivatives. And I am confounded at hearing that less than a Boeckh would not suffice to prove that the ἐξ ὑποβολῆς means, "by way of suggestion," "under the condition of being prompted." The meaning of which is evident: a state copy of the "Iliad," however it had been obtained by

Solon, a canon of the Homeric text, was confided to a prompter, whose duty was to check the slightest deviation from this authorised standard, to allow of no shortenings, omissions, or *sycophantic** alterations. In this sense the two regulations support and check each other. One provides for quantity, the other for quality. One secures that the whole shall be recited—the "Iliad," the whole "Iliad," and nothing *but* the "Iliad;" the other secures the fidelity of this whole. And here again comes in the story of Salamis to give us the "why" and the "wherefore" of these new regulations. If a legal or international question about Salamis had just been decided by the mere authority of a passage in the "Iliad," it was high time for statesmen to look about them, and to see that a poem, which was thus solemnly adjudged to be good evidence in the supreme courts of law, not only as between man and man, but also as between state and state, should have its text authenticated. And in fact, several new cases (see Eustathius on the second "Iliad") were decided not long after on the very same Homeric evidence.

But does not this prompter's copy presuppose a complete manuscript of the "Iliad?" Most certainly it does; and the question is left to the reader, whether this in fact was the service by which Pisistratus followed up and completed the service of Solon (as to going through the whole "Iliad"); or whether both services were due to Solon; in which case it will become necessary to look out for some

* "*Sycophantic:*"—The reader must remember that the danger was imminent: there was always a body ready to be bribed into forgery—viz., the mercenary *rhapsodoi:* there was always a body having a deep interest of family ostentation in bribing them into flattering interpolations. And standing by was a public the most uncritical and the most servile to literary forgeries (such is the Letters of Phalaris, of Themistocles, &c.), that ever can have existed.

idea of a new service that could remain open to Pisistratus.

Towards that idea, let us ask universally what services *could* be rendered by a statesman in that age to a poem situated as the "Iliad?" Such a man might restore; might authenticate; might assemble; might arrange.

1. He might restore—as from incipient decay or corruption.

2. He might authenticate—as between readings that were doubtful.

3. He might assemble the scattered—as from local dispersion of parts.

4. He might arrange as from confusion into self-justifying order—supplying links, healing dislocations, and revivifying the vestiges of more natural successions.

All these services, I have little doubt, were, in fact, rendered by Pisistratus. The three first are already involved in the story of our foolish friend Diomedes. Pisistratus would do justice to the wise enactment of Solon, by which the "Iliad" was raised into a liturgy, periodically rehearsed by law at the greatest of the Athenian festivals: he would ratify the regulation as to the prompter's (or state) copy. But this latter ordinance was rather the outline of a useful idea, than one which the first proposer could execute satisfactorily. Solon probably engrossed upon brazen tablets such a text as any one man could obtain. But it would be a work of time, of labour, of collation, and fine taste, to complete a sound edition. Even the work of Pisistratus was liable, as we know, to severe maltreatment by the Alexandrine critics. And by the way, those very Alexandrine revisals presuppose a received and orthodox text; for how could Zenodotus or Aristarchus breathe their mildewing breath upon the received read-

ings, how could they pronounce *X* or *Y*, for instance, spurious, unless by reference to some standard text in which *X* or *Y* had been adopted for legitimate? However, there is one single argument upon which the reader may safely allow himself to suspect the suspicions of Aristarchus, and to amend his emendations. It is this: Valkenaer, that exquisite Grecian, points out to merited reprobation a correction applied by Aristarchus to the autobiographical sketch of himself, which Phœnix gives to Achilles in "Iliad" x. Phœnix, in his old age, goes back to his youthful errors in a spirit of amiable candour. Out of affection to his mother, whose unmerited ill treatment he witnessed with filial sympathy, he had offered, at her request, an affront to his father's *harem* for which he could obtain no forgiveness. Τῇ πιθόμην, says Phœnix: her I obeyed. Which passage one villain alters into Τῇ *ε* πιθόμην: her I did *not* obey; and thus the whole story is ruined. But Aristarchus goes further: he cancels and stilettoes* the whole passage. But why? Upon what conceivable objection? Simply, in both cases, upon the ridiculous allegation, that this confession, so frank, and even pathetic, was immoral; and might put bad thoughts into the minds of "our young men." O, you two old vagabonds! And thus, it seems, we have had a Bowdler's "Iliad" long before our own Bowdler's Shakspere. It is fit, however, that this anecdote should be known, as it shows the sort of principles that governed the revisal of Aristarchus. An editor, who could castrate a text upon any plea of disliking the sentiment, is not trustworthy; such a man is ripe for the forgery of bank-notes. And for my part, I should far prefer the authorised edition of Pisistratus to all

* "*Stilettoes:*"—*i. e.*, obelises, or places his autocratic *obelus* before the passage.

the remodelled copies that issued from the Alexandrian Library.

So far, with reference to the three superior functions of Pisistratus. As to the fourth, his labour of arrangement, there is an important explanation to be made. Had the question been simply this—given four-and-twenty cantos of the "Iliad," to place them in the most natural order—the trouble would have been trivial for the arranger, and the range of objections narrower for us. Some books determine their own place in the series; and those which leave it doubtful are precisely the least important. But the case is supposed to have been very different. The existing distribution of the poem into twenty-four tolerably equal sections, designated by the twenty-four capitals of the Greek alphabet, is ascribed to Aristarchus. Though one incomparable donkey, a Greek scholiast, actually denies this upon the following ground:—Do you know, reader (says he), why Homer began the "Iliad" with the word *menin* (μηνιν*)? Look this way and I will tell you: it is a great mystery. What does the little μ of the Greek alphabet signify numerically? Why, forty. Good: And what does the η mean? Why, eight. Now, put both together, you have a prophecy or a promise on the part of Homer that he meant to write forty-eight books, which proves that the "Iliad" must have had originally twenty-four; because, if you take twenty-four from forty-eight, there remain just twenty-four books for the "Odyssey." *Quod erat demonstrandum.* Is not this a man for looking through milestones?

* The first words of the "Iliad" are, Μηνιν αειδε Θεα—*i. e.*, Wrath sing Goddess of Pelides.

THE AOIDOI, RHAPSODOI, HOMERIDÆ.

The Germans are exceedingly offended that any man in ancient days should presume to call himself a *rhapsodos*, without sending down a sealed letter to posterity, stating all the reasons which had induced him to take so unaccountable a step. And the uproar is inconceivable which they have raised about the office or function indicated by the word, as well as about the word itself, considered etymologically. I for my part honestly confess, that, instead of finding that perplexity in the *rhapsodos* which my German brothers find, I am chiefly perplexed in accounting for *their* perplexity. However, I had been seduced into writing a very long essay on the several classes named in my title, until I came to this discovery —that, however curious in itself, the whole inquiry *could* not be, and *was* not, by the Germans themselves, connected with any one point at issue about Homer or the "Iliad." After all the fighting on the question, it remains past denial, that the one sole proposition by which the *rhapsodoi* have been brought even into any semblance of connection with Homer, is the following:—Every narrative poem of any length was called a *rhapsodia;* and hence it is, that the several subordinate narratives of the "Iliad," such as that called the Ἀριστεια Ἀγαμεμνονος, the prowess of Agamemnon—the Ἀριστεια Αιαντος, the prowess of Ajax—Ποταμοιο μαχη, the battle by the river-side—Ὁπλοποια, the fabric of the arms—Νεων καταλογος, the muster of the ships—Δωλωνια, the adventure of Dolon—and many others, which are now united into the composite structure called the "Iliad," were always introduced by the chanter with a proemial address to some divinity. And the Hymns, which we have now under the name of Homer, are supposed by some to have been occasional

preludes of that sort, detached subsequently from their original station by some forgotten accident. The single fact which we know about these preludes is, that they were pure detached generalities, applicable to all cases indifferently; *ἀπαδοντα*, irrelevant as an old Greek author calls them; and to prevent any misconstruction of his meaning, as if that musical metaphor might have been applied by him to the mere music of the chanter, he adds—*και οὐδεν προς το πραγμα δηλοι*; and they foreshow nothing at all that relates to the matter. Now, from this little notice of their character, it is clear that, like doxologies, or choral burdens, or *refrains* to songs, they were not improvised; not *impromptus;* they were stereotyped forms, ready for all occasions. *A Jove principium,* says Horace: with this opening a man could never go wrong, let the coming narrative point which way it would. And Pindar observes, that all the Homeric *rhapsodoi* did in fact draw their openings from Jove. Or, by way of variety, the Muses might be a good inauguration, or Apollo; and in a great city like Athens or Ephesus, the local divinity—viz., the maiden goddess *Athene,* in the one case; or Artemis, in the other.

But the Germans, who will not leave this bone, after all its fruitless mumbling, want to pick a quarrel about the time when these *rhapsodoi* began to exist. What does *that* signify? I will quarrel with no man "about the age of Sir Archy's great-grandmother;" and yet, on consideration, I *will.* They say that their *rhapsodoi* were, comparatively with Homer, young people. I say that they were *not.* I cannot say that I know this "of my own knowledge;" but I have better evidence *for* it than any which they can have *against* it. In a certain old scholiast on Aristophanes, there is a couplet quoted from Hesiod in the following terms:—

"Ἐν Δήλῳ ποτε πρῶτον ἐγω και Ὁμηρος ἀοιδοι
Μελπομεν, ἐν νεαροισ ὑμνοις ἁψαντεσ ἀοιδην."

"Then first in Delos did I and Homer, two bards, perform as musical reciters, laying the *nexus* of our poetry in original hymns."

Plato, again, who stood nearer to Homer than any one of us by the little difference of two thousand two hundred and sixty years, swears that he knows Homer to have been a *rhapsodos*.

But what does the word mean? Strabo, in a passage which deserves closer attention than it has received, explains why it is that poetry in general was called *ἀοιδη*, or song. This name having been established, then afterwards each special kind of poetry bore this appellation—viz., *aoidé*, or *odé*, or *odia*, as a common or generic element in its designation, whilst its differential element was prefixed. Thus goat-song, or *tragodia*, revel-song, or *komodia*, were designations (derived from their occasional origins) of tragedy and comedy, both being chanted. On the same principle, *rhapsodia* shows by its ending that it is poetry, some kind or other: but what kind? Why, that secret is confided to the keeping of *rhaps*. And what may *rhaps* mean? Why, *rhapto* means *to sew with a needle*, consequently to *connect*. But, say you, all poetry must have some connection internally at least. True; but this circumstance is more noticeable and emphatic with regard to long *narrative* poems. The more were the parts to be connected, the more was the connection: more also depended upon it; and it caught the attention more forcibly. An ode, a song, a hymn, might contain a single ebullition of feeling. The connection might lie in the very rapture and passion, without asking for any effort on the poet's part. But, in any *epos* or epic romance, the several adventures, and parts

of adventures, had a connecting link running through them, such as bespoke design and effort in the composer—viz., the agency of a single hero, or of a predominant hero. And thus *rhapsodia*, or linked song, indicated, by an inevitable accident of all narrations, that it was narrative poetry. And a *rhapsodos* was the personal correlate of such poetry; he was the man that chanted it.

Scarcely is one row over before another commences. Pindar, it seems, has noticed the *rhapsodoi;* and, as if it were not enough to fight furiously about the explanation of that word, a second course of fights is undertaken, by German critics, about Pindar's explanation of the explanation. The Pindaric passages are two; one in the 3d Isthmian, where, speaking of Homer, Pindar says, that he established (*i. e.*, raised into life and celebrity) all modes of excellence, κατα ῥαβδον. It is a poet's way of saying that Homer did this as a *rhapsodos. Rhabdos,* therefore, is used as the symbol of a *rhapsodos;* it is, or it may be conceived to be, his instrument for connecting the narrative poem which gives him his designation. But what instrument? Is it a large darning-needle for sewing the parts together? If so, Homer will want a thimble. No, says one solemn critic, *not* a needle: none but a blockhead would think of such a thing. Well, what is it, then? It is, says he, a cane—a wand—a rattan. And what is Homer to do with a cane? Why, understand, that when his singing robes were on (for it is an undoubted fact that the ancient *rhapsodos* not only chanted in full pontificals, but had two sets of robes, *crimson* when he chanted the "Iliad," *violet-coloured* when he chanted the "Odyssey"), in that case the *rhapsodos* held his stick in his right hand. But what sort of a stick? *Stick* is a large genus, running up from switch to cudgel, from rod to

bludgeon. And my own persuasion is, that this stick, whether cylinder or pencil of wood, had something to do with the roll of remembrances (not perhaps written copies, but mechanical suggestions for recovering the main succession of paragraphs) which the *rhapsodos* used as shorthand notes for aiding his performance. Perhaps it was a Lacedemonian *scytale*.

The other passage of Pindar is in the second Nemean—

Ὅθεν περ καὶ Ὁμηρίδαι ῥαπτῶν ἐπέων τὰ πολλ' ἀοιδοὶ ἀρχόνται.*

Of a certain conqueror at the games, Pindar says, that he took his beginning from that point—viz., Jove—whence the Homeridæ take theirs; alluding to the prelusive hymns. Now, what seems most remarkable in this passage is the art with which Pindar identifies the three classes of—1. *Homeridæ;* 2. *Aoidoi;* 3. *Rhapsodoi.* The words ῥαπτῶν ἐπέων ἀοιδοὶ are an ingenious way of expressing that the *aoidoi* were the same as the *rhapsodoi.* But, where Pindar saw no essential difference, except as a species differs from a genus, it is not likely that we of this day shall detect one. At all events, it is certain that no discussion connected with any one of these three classes has thrown any light upon the main question as to the integrity of the "Iliad." The *aoidoi,* and perhaps the *rhapsodoi,* certainly existed in the days of Homer. The *Homeridæ* must have arisen after him; but when, or under what circumstances, no record remains to say. Only the place of the *Homeridæ* is known: it was Crete; and this again brings us round to the *personal* connection of Homer with that famous island. But all is too obscure to penetrate, and in fact has not been penetrated.

* Literally—*Whence also the Homeridæ, who are in effect the singers* (ἀοιδοὶ) *of continuous metrical narratives* (*i. e.*, ῥαπτῶν ἐπέων), *do for the most part* (τὰ πολλ') *derive their openings* (ἀρχόνται).

Verdict on the Homeric Question.

I will now, reader, endeavour to give you the heads of a judgment, or verdict, on this intricate question, drawn up with extreme care by myself.

1. Rightly was it said by Voss, that all arguments worth a straw in this matter must be derived from the internal structure of the "Iliad." Let us, therefore, hold an inquest upon the very body of this memorable poem; and first of all let us consider its outside characteristics, its style, language, metrical structure.

One of the arguments on which the sceptics rely is this —a thousand years, say they, make a severe trial of a man's style. What is very good Greek at one end of that period, will sometimes be unintelligible Greek at the other. And throughout this period it will have been the duty of the *rhapsodoi*, or public reciters, to court the public interest, to sustain it, to humour it, by adapting their own forms of delivery to the existing state of language. Well, what of that? Why, this—that, under so many repeated alterations, the "Iliad," as we now have it, must resemble Sir Francis Drake's ship—repaired so often, that not a spar of the original vessel can have remained.

In answer to this, I demand—why a thousand years? Doubtless there was that space between Homer and the Christian era. But why particularly connect the Greek language with the Christian era? In this artifice, reader, though it sounds natural to bring forward our Christian era in a question that is partly chronological, already there is bad faith. The Greek language had nothing to do with the Christian era. Mark this, and note well—that already in the era of Pericles, whose chronological *locus* is 444 years B.C., the Greek language had reached its consummation. And by that word I mean its state of rigid settlement.

Will any man deny that the Greek of Thucydides, Sophocles, Euripides, who were, in the fullest sense, contemporaries with Pericles—that the Greek of Plato or Xenophon, who were at least children of some growth before Pericles died—continued through all after ages (in the etymological sense of the word) *standard* Greek? That is, it was standing Greek—Greek which *stood* still, and never afterwards shifted its ground; so that eighteen hundred and ninety years later, at the final capture of Constantinople by the Ottomans, it remained the true familiar Greek of educated people, such Greek as all educated people talked, and removed even from the vulgar Greek of the mob only as the written language of books always differs from the spoken dialect of the uneducated. The time, therefore, for which we have to account is, *not* a thousand years, but a little more than one-half of that space. The range, therefore—the compass of time within which Homer had to struggle with the agencies of change: viz., down to Pericles—was about five centuries and a-half.

Now the tendency to change is different in different languages, both from internal causes (mechanism, &c.), and from causes external to the language, laid in the varying velocities of social progress. Secondly, besides this varying liability to change, in one language as compared with another, there is also a varying rate of change in the same language compared with itself. Change in language is not, as in many natural products, continuous: it is not equable, but eminently moves by fits and starts. Probably one hundred and fifty years at stagnant periods of history do less to modify a language than forty years amidst great struggles of intellect. And one thing I must insist on, which is, that, between Homer and Pisistratus, the changes in Grecian society, likely to affect the lan-

guage, were not to be compared, for power, with those acting upon English society ever since the Reformation.

This being premised, I request attention to the following case. Precisely on this very summer day, so bright and brilliant, of 1841,* are the five hundred years completed (less by forty-five years than the interspace between Homer and Pisistratus) since Chaucer was a stout boy, "alive," and probably "kicking;" for he was fined, about 1341, for kicking a Franciscan friar in Fleet Street, though Ritson erroneously asserts that the story was a "hum," invented by Chatterton. Now, what was the character of Chaucer's diction? A great delusion exists on that point. Some ninety or one hundred words that are now obsolete, certainly not many more, vein the whole surface of Chaucer; and thus a *primâ facie* impression is conveyed that Chaucer is difficult to understand, whereas a very slight practice familiarises his language. The "Canterbury Tales" were not made public until 1380; but the composition was certainly proceeding between 1350 and 1380, and before 1360 some considerable parts were *published*—yes, *published.* Here we have a space greater by thirty-five years than that between Homer and Pisistratus. And observe—had Chaucer's Tales enjoyed the benefit of an oral recitation, were they assisted to the understanding by the pauses in one place, the hurrying and crowding of unimportant words at another, and by the proper distribution of emphasis everywhere (all which, though impracticable in regular singing, is well enough accomplished in a chant, or λογος μεμελισμενος), there is no man, however unfamiliar with old English, but might be made to go along with the movement of his admirable tales, as regards the

* The first publication of this paper was about sixteen years ago.

sense and the passion, though he might still remain at a loss for the meaning of insulated words.

Not Chaucer himself, however, but that model of language which Chaucer ridicules and parodies, as becoming obsolete in his days, the rhyme of Sir Thopas—a model which may be safely held to represent the language of the two centuries previous—is the point of appeal. Sir Thopas is clearly a parody of the Metrical Romances. Some of those hitherto published by Ritson, &c., are not older than Chaucer; but some ascend much higher, and may be referred to 1200, or perhaps earlier. Date them from 1240, and *that* places a period of six centuries complete between ourselves and them. Notwithstanding which, the greater part of the Metrical Romances, when aided by the connection of events narrated, or when impassioned, remain perfectly intelligible to this hour.

> "What for labour, and what for faint,
> Sir Bevis was well nigh attaint."

This is a couplet in Bevis, of Southampton; and another I will quote from memory in the romance of "Sir Gawaine and Sir Ywaine." In a vast forest, Sir Gawaine, by striking a magical shield suspended to a tree, had caused a dreadful storm to succeed; which, subsiding, is followed by the gloomy apparition of a mailed knight, who claims the forest for his own, taxes Sir Gawaine with having intruded on his domain, and concludes a tissue of complaints with saying that he (Sir Gawaine) had

> "With weathers waken'd him of rest,
> And done him wrong in his forést."

Now, these two casual recollections well and fairly represent the general current of the language; not certainly what would now be written, but what is luminously in-

telligible from the context. At present, for instance, *faint* is an adjective; but the context, and the corresponding word *labour*, easily teach the reader that it here means *faintness*. So, again, "weather" is not now used for storms; but it is so used by a writer as late as Lord Bacon, and yet survives in such words as "weather-beaten," "weather-stained."

Now, I say that the interval of time between these romances and ourselves is greater than between Homer and the age of Pericles. I say, also, that the constant succession of metrical writers connecting the time of Homer with that of Pericles, such as the authors of the "Nostoi" (or Memorable Returns homeward from Troy), of the "Cypria," of the many Cyclical poems, next of the Lyric poets, a list closing with Pindar, in immediate succession to whom, and through most of his life strictly a contemporary with Pindar, comes Æschylus, close upon whose heels follow the whole cluster of dramatic poets who glorified the life of Pericles—this apparently *continuous* series of verse-writers, without the interposition of a single prose-writer, would inevitably have the effect of keeping alive the poetic forms and choice of words, in a degree not so reasonably to be expected under any interrupted succession. Our Chaucer died an old man, above seventy, in the year 1400; that is, in the *closing* year of the fourteenth century. The next century—that is, the fifteenth—was occupied in much of its latter half by the civil wars of the two Roses, which threw back the development of the English Literature, and tended to disturb the fluent transmission of Chaucer's and Gower's diction. The tumultuous century which came next—viz., the sixteenth, the former half of which was filled with the Reformation—caused a prodigious fermentation and expansion of the English intellect. But such convulsions are

very unfavourable to the steady conservation of language, and of everything else depending upon usage. Now, in Grecian history, there are no corresponding agitations of society; the currents of tradition seem to flow downwards, without meeting anything to ripple their surface. It is true that the great Persian war *did* agitate Greece profoundly; and, by combining the Greeks from every quarter in large masses, this memorable war must have given a powerful shock to the stagnant ideas inherited from antiquity. But, as this respects Homer, observe how thoroughly its operation is defeated: for the outrageous conflagration of Sardis by Grecian troops, which it was that provoked the invasion of Greece by the Persians under Darius, occurred about 500 B.C.; and the *final* events of the war under Xerxes—viz., Salamis, Platæa, &c.—occurred in 480 B.C. But already, by Pisistratus, whose *locus* is fifty years before the affair of Sardis, Homer had been revised and settled, and (as one might express it) stereotyped. Consequently, the chief political revolution affecting Greece collectively, if you except the Dorian migrations, &c., between Homer and Pericles, was intercepted from all possibility of affecting the Homeric diction, &c., through the seasonable authentication of the entire Homeric text under the seal and *imprimatur* of Pisistratus. Here is the old *physical* guarantee urged by Æsop's lamb *versus* wolf, that Homer's text could not have been reached by any influence, direct or oblique, from the greatest of post-Homeric political convulsions. It would be the old miracle of the Greek proverb (Ἀνω ποταμων, &c.), which adopted the reflux of rivers towards their fountains as the liveliest type of the impossible.

There is also a philosophic reason, why the range of diction in Chaucer should be much wider, and liable to

greater changes, than that of Homer. Review those parts of Chaucer which at this day are most obscure, and it will uniformly be found that they are the *subjective* sections of his poetry; those, for instance, in which he is elaborately decomposing a character. A character is a subtle fugacious essence, which does, or does not, exist, according to the capacity of the eye which is applied to it. In Homer's age, no such meditative differences were perceived. All is *objective* in the descriptions, and external. And in those cases where the mind or its affections must be noticed, always it is by the broad distinctions of anger, fear, love, hatred, without any vestige of a sense for the more delicate interblendings or *nuances* of such qualities. But a language built upon these elementary distinctions is necessarily more durable than another, which, applying itself to the subtler phenomena of human nature, exactly in that proportion applies itself to what is capable of being variously viewed, or viewed in various combinations, as society shifts its aspects.

The result from all this is, that, throughout the four hundred and forty-five years from Homer to Pisistratus, the diction even of real life would not have suffered so much alteration, as in modern times it would be likely to do within some single centuries. But with respect to poetry, the result is stronger.

The diction of poetry is everywhere a privileged diction; the antique or scriptural language is everywhere affected in serious or impassioned poetry. So that no call would arise for modern adaptations, until the language had grown unintelligible. Nor would *that* avail to raise such a call. The separate non-intelligibility of a word would cause no difficulty, whilst it would give the grace of antique colouring. For a word which is separately obscure is not so *in*

nexu. Suppose, reader, we were to ask you the meaning of the English word *chode*, you might be a little puzzled. Yet it is an honest and once an industrious word, though now retired from business; and it stands in our authorised translation of the Bible: where, if you had chanced to meet it *in loco*, you would easily have collected from the context that it was the past tense of *chide*. Again, what southern reader of Sir Walter Scott's novels has failed to gather the full sense of the Scottish dialect? or what Scotchman to gather the sense of the Irish dialect, so plentifully strewed in modern tales? or what landsman to gather the sense of the marine dialect in our nautical novels? Or—which is a case often of more trying effort—which of us Britishers has been repelled by the anomalous dialect of Mrs Beecher Stowe (with its *sorter*, *kinder*, &c.) from working through the jungles of "Uncle Tom?" In all such cases, the passion, the animation and movement of the feeling, very often the logic, as they arise from the context, carry you fluently along with the meaning, though many of the words, taken separately and detached from this context, might have been unintelligible.

Equating, therefore, the sleeping state of early Greece with the stirring progress of modern Christian lands, I come to this conclusion, that Homer, the genuine unaltered Homer, would not, by all likelihood, be more archaic in his colouring of style to the age of Solon or even of Pericles, than the "Froissart" of Lord Berners is to ourselves. That is, I equate four hundred and forty-five early Greek years with the last three hundred and twenty English years. But I will concede something more. The common English translation of the long prose romance, called "Mort d'Arthur," was composed, I believe, about the year 1480. This will, there-

fore, be three hundred and sixty years old. Now, both Lord Berners and the "Mort d'Arthur" are as intelligible as this morning's newspaper, in June, 1841. And one proof that they are so is, that both works have been reprinted *verbatim et literatim* in this generation for popular use. Something venerable and solemn there is in both these works, as again in the "Paston Letters," which are hard upon four hundred years old, but no shadow of retarding difficulty to the least practised of modern readers.

B.—Homer's Lexis.

Now, reader, having stated, by known English examples, what effect was reasonably to have been anticipated from age, let us next inquire what effect has in fact taken place. Observe the monstrous dishonesty of these German critics. What if a man should argue thus: "This helmet never can have descended from Mambrino; for, if it had, there would have been weather-stains, cracks, dents of swords," &c. To which it is replied:—"Doubtless; but have you looked to see if there are *not* such marks of antiquity?" Would you not think the disparager of the helmet worthy of the treadmill, if it should turn out that he had never troubled himself to examine it? These Germans argue *à priori*, that, upon certain natural causes, there would arise a temptation to the Homeric chanters for adapting the diction to their audience. Conditionally I grant this—that is, if a deep night of darkness fell suddenly upon the language. But my answer is, that this condition never would be realised; and that a solemnising twilight is the very utmost which could ever steal over Homer's diction. Meantime, where is the sense of calculating *à priori* what would be *likely* to happen, when, by simply opening a book, we can see what *has* happened?

These Germans talk as if the Homer we now have spoke exactly such Greek as Euripides and Sophocles. Or, if some slight differences are admitted, as though these were really too inconsiderable to meet the known operation of chance and change through four and a-half centuries. To hear *them*, you must suppose that Homer differed little more from the golden writers of Greece than as Pope's diction differs from that of 1841. Who now says, *writ* for *wrote* and for *written*? Who says *'tis* and *'twas* since Queen Anne's reign? There are not twelve consecutive lines in Pope, Swift, Addison, which will not be found marked by such slight peculiarities of their age. Yet their general agreement with ourselves is so striking, that the difficulty is to detect the differences. Now, if Homer were in that condition relatively to the age of Pericles—were it even that he exhibited no more sombre hues than those which Æschylus exhibits, as compared with his younger brothers of the drama—I should grant at once that a case is made out, calling for some explanation. There has been a change; there is something to account for. Somebody has been "doctoring" this man, would be the inference. But how stands the truth? Why, reader, the Homeric *lexis* is so thoroughly peculiar and individual, that it requires a separate lexicon; and if all men do not use a separate lexicon, it is only because that particular vocabulary has been digested into the series of general vocabularies. Pierce Plowman is not more unlike in diction to Sir Walter Scott than is Homer to Euripides. And, instead of simply accounting for the time elapsed, and fairly answering to the reasonable attrition of that time, the Homeric diction is sufficient to account for three such spaces. What would the infidels have? Homer, they say, is an old—old—very old man, whose trembling limbs have borne him to your

door; and, therefore—what? Why, he ought to look very old indeed. Well, good men, he *does* look very old indeed. He ought, they say, to be covered with lichens and ivy. Well, he *is* covered with lichens and ivy. And sure I am, that few people will undertake to know how a man looks when he is five hundred years old, by comparison with himself at four hundred. Suffice it here to say, for the benefit of the unlearned, that not one of our own earliest writers, hardly Thomas of Ercildoune, has more of peculiar antique words in his vocabulary than Homer.

C.—Homer's Metre.

In this case, the Germans themselves admit the extraordinary character of the Homeric *rhythmus*. "How free, how spirited in its motion!" they all exclaim; "how characteristically his own!" Well, now, did the father of sophisms ever hear of such stuff as this, when you connect it with what these Germans say elsewhere? As well might a woman say, that you had broken her china cups, but that you had artfully contrived to preserve the original Chinese designs. How could you preserve the form or surface, if you destroy the substance? And, if these imaginary adapters of Homer, according to the German pretence, modernised his whole diction, how could they preserve his metrical effects? With the peculiar word or idiom would vanish the peculiar prosody. Even a single word is not easily replaced by another having the same sense, the same number of syllables, and in each syllable the same metrical quantity; but how immeasurably more difficult is this, when the requisition is for a whole sentence or clause having the same sense in the same number of syllables and the same prosody? Why, a man would not doctor three lines in a century under such intolerable

conditions. And, at the end of his labour, like Addison's small poet, who worked for years upon the name of "Mary Bohun," whom he was courting, in order to bind its stubborn letters within the hoop-ring of an anagram, he would fail, and would go mad into the bargain, upon finding that the colloquial pronunciation of the name (viz., *Boon*) had misled him in his spelling. If the metre is characteristically Homeric, as say these infidels, then is the present text (so inextricably coadunated with the metre), upon their own showing, the good old Homeric text—and no mistake.

But, reader, the Homeric metre is not truly described by these men. It is certainly *kenspeck*, to use a good old English word—that is to say, recognisable; you challenge it for Homer's whenever you meet it. Characteristic it is, but not exactly for the reason they assign. The fact is, though flowing and lively, it betrays the immaturity of the metrical art. Those constraints, from which the Germans praise its freedom, are the constraints of exquisite art—art of a kind unknown to the simple Homer. This is a difficult subject; for, in our own literature, the true science of metrical effects has not belonged to our later poets, but to the elder. Spenser, Shakspere, Milton, are the great masters of exquisite versification. And Waller, who was idly reputed to have refined our metre, was a mere trickster, having a single tune moving in his imagination, without compass and without variety. Chaucer, also, whom Dryden in this point so thoroughly misunderstood, was undoubtedly a most elaborate master of metre, as will appear when we have a *really* good edition of him. But in the Pagan literature this was otherwise. We see in the Roman poets that, precisely as they were antique, they were careless, or at least very inartificial in the ma-

nagement of their metre. Thus Lucilius, Ennius, even Lucretius, leave a class of faults in their verse, from which Virgil would have revolted. And the very same class of faults is found in Homer. But though faults as regards severe art, they are in the very spirit of *naïveté* or picturesque naturalness, and wear the stamp of a primitive age —artless and inexperienced.

This article would require a volume. But I will content myself with one illustration. Every scholar is aware of the miserable effect produced where there is no *cæsura,* in that sense of the word *cæsura* which means the interlocking of the several feet into the several words. Thus, imagine a line like this:—

"Urbem Romam primo condit Romulus anno."

Here the six feet of the hexameter are separately made out by six several words. Each word is a foot; and no foot interlocks into another. So that there is no *cæsura.* Yet even *that* is not the worst fault of the line. The other and more destructive is—the coincidence of the *ictus,* or emphasis, with the first syllable of every foot.

Now, in Homer we see both faults repeatedly. Thus, to express the thundering pace with which a heavy stone comes trundling back from a hill-top, he says,

"Autis epeita pedónde kulindeto laäs anaides."

Here there is the shocking fault, to any metrical ear, of making the emphasis fall regularly on the first syllable, which in effect obliterates all the benefit of the cæsura.

Now, Virgil, in an age of refinement, has not one such line, nor could have endured such a line. In that verse, expressing the gallop of a horse, he also has five dactyles:

"Quadrupedante putrem sonitu quatit ungula campum."

But he takes care to distribute the accents properly, on which so much even of the ancient versification depended:

except in the two last feet, the emphasis of Virgil's line never coincides with the first syllable of the foot. Homer, it will be said, wished to express mimetically the rolling, thundering, leaping motion of the stone. True; but so did Virgil wish to express the thundering gallop of the horse, in which the beats of the hoofs return with regular intervals. Each sought for a picturesque effect; each adopted a dactylic structure: but to any man who has studied this subject, I need not say that picturesqueness, like any other effect, must be subordinated to a higher law of beauty. Whence, indeed, it is that the very limits of imitation arise for every art, sculpture, painting, &c., indicating what it ought to imitate, and what it ought not to imitate. And unless regard is had to such higher restraints, metrical effects become as silly and childish as the musical effects in Kotzwarra's "Battle of Prague," with its ridiculous attempts to mimic the firing of cannon, groans of the wounded, &c., instead of involving the passion of a battle in the agitation of the music.

These rudenesses of art, however, are generally found in its early stages. And I am satisfied that, as art advanced, these defects must have been felt for such; so that, had any license of improvement existed, which is what the Germans pretend, they would have been removed. That they were left untouched in the ages of the great lyrical masters, when metre was so scientifically understood, is a strong argument that Homer was sacred from all tampering. Over the whole field of the Homeric versification, both for its quality of faults and its quality of merits, lies diffused this capital truth—that no opening existed for the correction of any fault, in any age after the perception of that fault—(that is, no opening to correction when the temptation to correct could first have arisen).

D.—THE HOMERIC FORMULÆ.

Here is another countersign for the validity of our present Homeric text. In our own metrical romances, or wherever a poem is meant not for readers but for chanters and oral reciters, these *formulæ*, to meet the same recurring cases, exist by scores. Thus every woman in these metrical romances who happens to be young, is described as "so bright of blé," or complexion; always a man goes "the mountenance of a mile," before he overtakes or is overtaken. And so on through a vast bead-roll of cases. In the same spirit Homer has his eternal τον δ' αρ' υποδρα ιδων, or επεα πτεροεντα προσηυδα, or τον δ' απαμειβομενος προσεφη, &c.

Now these, again, under any refining spirit of criticism, at liberty to act freely, are characteristics that would have disappeared. Not that they are faults: on the contrary, to a reader of sensibility, such recurrences wear an aspect of child-like simplicity, beautifully recalling the features of Homer's primitive age. But they would have appeared faults to all commonplace critics in literary ages.

I say, therefore, that, first, the Diction of the "Iliad" (B); secondly, the Metre of the "Iliad" (C); thirdly, the Formulæ and recurring Clauses of the "Iliad" (D)—all present us with so many separate guarantees for good faith—so many separate attestations to the purity of the Homeric text from any considerable interference. For every one of these would have given way to the "Adapters," had any such people operated upon Homer.

2. The first class of arguments, therefore, for the sanity of the existing Homer, is derived from language. A second argument I derive from THE IDEALITY OF ACHILLES. This I owe to a suggestion of Wordsworth's. Once, when I observed to him, that of imagination, in his own sense, I saw no instance in the "Iliad," he replied,

"Yes; there is the character of Achilles; this is imaginative, in the same sense as Ariosto's Angelica." *Character* is not properly the word, nor was it what Wordsworth meant. It is an idealised conception. The excessive beauty of Angelica, for instance, in the "Orlando Furioso," robs the paladins of their wits; draws anchorites into guilt; tempts the baptised into mortal feud; summons the unbaptised to war; brings nations together from the ends of the earth. And so, with different but analogous effects, the very perfection of courage, beauty, strength, speed, skill of eye, of voice, and all personal accomplishments, are embodied in the son of Peleus. He has the same supremacy in modes of courtesy, and doubtless, according to the poet's conception, in virtue. In fact, the astonishing blunder which Horace made in deciphering this Homeric portrait, gives the best memorandum for recalling the real points of his most self-commanding character:

> "Impiger, iracundus, inexorabilis, acer,
> Jura negat sibi nata, nihil non arrogat armis."

Was that man "iracundus," who, in the very opening of the "Iliad," makes his anger, under the most brutal insult, bend to the public welfare? When two people quarrel, it is too commonly the unfair award of careless bystanders, that "one is as bad as the other;" whilst generally it happens that one of the parties is but the respondent in a quarrel originated by the other. I never witnessed a quarrel in my life where the fault was equally divided between the parties. Homer says of the two chiefs, διαστήτην ἐρίσαντε, they stood aloof in feud; but what was the nature of the feud? Agamemnon had inflicted upon Achilles, himself a king, and the most brilliant chieftain of the confederate army, the very foulest outrage (matter and man-

ner) that can be imagined. Because his own brutality to a priest of Apollo had caused a pestilence, and he finds that he must resign this priest's daughter, he declares that he will indemnify himself by seizing a female captive from the tents of Achilles. Why of Achilles more than of any other man? Colour of right, or any relation between his loss and his redress, this brutal Agamemnon does not offer by pretence. But he actually executes his threat. Nor does he *ever* atone for it; since his returning Briseis, without disavowing his right to have seized her, is wide of the whole point at issue. Now, under what show of common sense can that man be called *iracundus*, who calmly submits to such an indignity as this? Or is that man *inexorabilis*, who sacrifices to the tears and grey hairs of Priam his own meditated revenge, giving back the body of the enemy who had robbed him of his dearest friend? Or is there any gleam of truth in saying that *jura negat sibi nata*, when, of all the heroes in the "Iliad," he is the most punctiliously courteous, the most ceremonious in his religious observances, and the one who most cultivated the arts of peace? Or is that man the violent defier of all law and religion, who submits with so pathetic a resignation to the doom of early death?

> "Enough, I know my fate—to die; to see no more
> My much-loved parents, or my native shore."

Charles XII. of Sweden threatened to tickle that man who had libelled his hero Alexander. But Alexander himself would have tickled Master Horace for this infernal libel on Achilles, if they had happened to be contemporaries. I have a love for Horace; but my wrath has always burned furiously against him for his horrible perversion of the truth in this well-known tissue of calumnies.

The character, in short, of the matchless Pelides has an ideal finish and a divinity about it, which argue that it never could have been a fiction or a gradual accumulation from successive touches. It was raised by a single flash of creative imagination; it was a reality seen through the harmonising abstractions of two centuries;* and it is in itself a great unity, which penetrates every section where it comes forward, with an identification of these several parts as the work of one man.

3. Another powerful guarantee of the absolute integrity which belongs to the "Iliad" lies in the Ionic forms of language, combined everywhere (as Plato remarks) with Ionic forms of life. Homer had seen the modes of Dorian life, as in many cities of Crete. But his heart turned habitually to the Ionian life of his infancy. Here the man who builds on pretences of recasting, &c., will find himself in this dilemma. If, in order to account for the poem still retaining its Ionic dress, which must have been affected by any serious attempts at modernising it, he should argue that the Ionic dialect, though not used on the continent, continued to be perfectly intelligible; then, my good sir, what call for recasting it? Nobody supposes that an antique form of language would be objectionable *per se*, or that it would be other than solemn and religious in its effect, so long as it continued to be intelligible. On the other hand, if he argues that it must gradually have grown unintelligible or less intelligible (for that the Ionic of Herodotus, in the age of Pericles, was very different from the Homeric), in that case, to *whom* would it be unintelligible? Why, to the Athenians, for example, or to some people of continental Greece. But, on that suppo-

* "*Two centuries:*"—*i. e.*, the supposed interval between Troy and Homer.

sition, it would have been exchanged for some form of Attic or other continental Greek. To be Ionian by descent, did not imply the use of a dialect formed in Asia Minor. And not only would heterogeneous forms of language have thus crept into the "Iliad," but inevitably, in making these changes, other heterogeneities in the substance would have crept in concurrently. That purity and sincerity of Ionic life, which arrested the eye of Plato, would have melted away under such modern adulterations.

4. But another argument against the possibility of such recasts is founded upon a known remarkable fact. It is a fact of history, coming down to us from several quarters, that the people of Athens were exceedingly discontented with the slight notice taken of themselves in the "Iliad." Now, observe, already this slight notice is in itself one argument of Homer's antiquity; and the Athenians did wrong to murmur at so many petty towns of the Peloponnesus being glorified, while in *their* case Homer only gives one line or so to Menestheus their chief. Let them be thankful for getting anything. Homer knew what Athens was in those days much better than any of us; and surely Glasgow or Liverpool could not complain of being left out of the play, in a poem on the Crusades. But there was another case that annoyed the Athenians equally. Theseus, it is well known, was a great scamp; in fact, a very bad fellow indeed. You need go no further than Ariadne (who, by most traditions, hanged herself in her garters at Naxos) to prove *that*. Now, Homer, who was determined to tell no lies in the matter, roundly blurts out the motive of Theseus for his base desertion of Ariadne, which had the double guilt of cruelty and of ingratitude, as in Jason's conduct towards Medea. It was, says the honest bard, because he was desperately in love with Ægle. This line

in Homer was like a coroner's verdict on Ariadne—*died by the visitation of Theseus.* It was impossible to hide this act of the national hero, if the line were suffered to stand. An attempt was therefore made to eject it. Pisistratus is charged, in this one instance, with having smuggled in a single forged line. But, even in his own lifetime, it was dismally suspected; and when Pisistratus saw men looking askance at it, he would say, "Well, sir, what's in the wind now? What are you squinting at?" Upon which the man would answer, "Oh, nothing, sir; I was only looking at things in general." But Pisistratus knew better: it was no go—*that* he saw; and the line is obelised to this day. Now, where Athens failed, is it conceivable that anybody else would succeed?

5. A fifth argument, upon which we rely much, is the CIRCUMSTANTIALITY of the "Iliad." Let the reader pause to consider what *that* means in this particular case. The invention of little personal circumstances and details is now a well-known artifice of novelists. We see, even in our oldest metrical romances, a tendency to this mode of giving a lively expression to the characters, as well as of giving a colourable reality to the tale. Yet, even with us, it is an art that has never but once been successfully applied to regular history. De Foe is the only author known, who has so plausibly circumstantiated his false historical records as to make them pass for genuine, even with literary men and critics. In his "Memoirs of a Cavalier," one of his poorest forgeries, he assumes the character of a soldier who had fought under Gustavus Adolphus (1628–31), and afterwards (1642–45) in our own Parliamentary War; in fact, he corresponds chronologically to Captain Dalgetty. In other works he personates a sea-captain, a hosier, a runaway apprentice, an

officer under Lord Peterborough in his Catalonian expedition. In this last character he imposed upon Dr Johnson; and, by men better read in history than Dr Johnson, he has actually been quoted as a regular historical authority. How did he accomplish so difficult an end? Simply by inventing such little circumstantiations of any character or incident, as seem, by their apparent inertness of effect, to verify themselves; for, where the reader is told that such a person was the posthumous son of a tanner; that his mother married afterwards a Presbyterian schoolmaster, who gave him a smattering of Latin; but, the schoolmaster dying of the plague, that he was compelled at sixteen to enlist for bread—in all this, as there is nothing at all amusing, we conclude that the author could have no reason to detain us with such particulars, but simply because they were true. To invent, when nothing at all is gained by inventing, there seems no imaginable temptation. It never occurs to us, that this very construction of the case, this very inference from such neutral details, was precisely the object which De Foe had in view—was the very thing which he counted on, and by which he meant to profit. He thus gains the opportunity of impressing upon his tales a double character: he makes them so amusing, that girls read them for novels; and he gives them such an air of verisimilitude, that men read them for histories.

Now this is one amongst the many arts by which, in comparison of the ancients, we have so prodigiously extended the compass of literature. In Grecian, or even in Roman literature, no dream ever arose of interweaving a fictitious interest with a true one. Nor was the possibility then recognised of any interest founded in fiction, even though kept apart from historic records. Look at

Statius; look at Virgil; look at Valerius Flaccus; or look at the entire Greek drama; not one incident beyond the mere descriptive circumstances of a battle, or a storm, or a funeral solemnity, with the ordinary turns of skill or chance in the games which succeed, can be looked upon as matter of invention. All rested upon actual tradition: —in the "Æneid," for instance, upon ancient Italian traditions still lingering amongst a most ignorant people; in the "Thebaid," where the antiquity of the story is too great to allow of this explanation, doubtless they were found in Grecian poems. Four centuries after the Christian era, if the "Satyricon" of Petronius Arbiter is excepted, and a few sketches of Lucian, we find the first feeble tentative development of the romance interest. The "Cyropædia" was not so much a romance, as simply one-sided in its information. But, in the "Iliad," we meet with many of these little individual circumstances, which can be explained (consistently with the remark here made) upon no principle whatever except that of downright notorious truth. Homer could not have wandered so far astray from the universal sympathies of his country, as ever to think of fictions so useless; and if he had, he would soon have been recalled to the truth by disagreeable experiences; for the construction would have been, that he was a person very ill informed, and not trustworthy through ignorance.

Thus, in speaking of Polydamas, Homer says ("Iliad" xviii. 250) that he and Hector were old cronies; which might strike the reader as odd, since Polydamas was no fighting man at all, but cultivated the arts of peace. Partly, therefore, by way of explaining their connection —partly for the simple reason that doubtless it was a fact—Homer adds that they were both born in the same

night; a circumstance which is known to have had considerable weight upon early friendships in the houses of oriental princes.

"Ἕκτορι δ' ἦεν ἑταῖρος, ἰὴ δ' ἐν νυκτὶ γένοντο."
"To Hector he was a bosom friend,
For in one night they were born."

I argue, therefore, that, had Homer not lived within a reasonable number of generations after Troy, he never would have learned a little fact of this kind. He heard it perhaps from his nurse, good old creature, who again had heard it from her grandfather when talking with emotion of Troy and its glorious palaces, and of the noble line of princes that perished in its final catastrophe. A ray of that great sunset had still lingered in the old man's imagination; and the deep impression of so memorable a tragedy had carried into popular remembrance vast numbers of specialties and circumstantialities, such as might now be picked out of the "Iliad," that could have no attraction for the mind, but simply under the one condition that they were true. An interval as great as four centuries, when all relation between the house of Priam and the surrounding population must have been obliterated, would cause such petty anecdotes to lose their entire interest; and, in that case, they would never have reached Homer. Here, therefore, is a collateral indication that Homer lived probably within two centuries of Troy. On the other hand, if the "Iliad" had ever become so obsolete in its diction that popular feeling called for a *diaskeué*, or thorough recast, in that case, I argue that all such trivial circumstances (interesting only to those who happened to know them for facts) would have dropped out of the composition.

6. That argument is of a nature to yield me an extensive field, if I had space to pursue its cultivation. The

following argument is negative, but far from unimportant: it lies in the absence of all anachronisms, which would most certainly have arisen in any modern remodelling, and which do in fact disfigure all the Greek forgeries of letters, &c., in Alexandrian ages. How inevitable, amongst a people so thoroughly uncritical as the Greeks, would have been the introduction of anachronisms by wholesale, had a more modern hand been allowed to tamper with the texture of the poem! But, on the contrary, all inventions, rights, usages, known to have been of later origin than the Homeric ages, are absent from the "Iliad." For instance, in any recast subsequent to the era of 700 B.C., how natural it would have been (as has been more than once remarked) to introduce the trumpet! Yet this is absent from the "Iliad." Cavalry, again, how excellent a resource for varying and inspiriting the battles; yet Homer introduces horses only as attached to the chariots; and the chariots as used only by a few leading heroes, whose heavy mail made it impossible for *them* to go on foot, as the mass of the army did. Why, then, did Homer himself forbear to introduce cavalry? Was he blind to the variety he would have gained for his descriptive scenes? No; but simply upon the principle (so absolute for *him*) of adhering to the facts. But what caused the fact? Why was there no cavalry? Evidently from the enormous difficulty of carrying any number of horses by sea, under the universal non-adaptation to such a purpose of the Greek shipping. To form a cavalry, a man must begin by horse-stealing. The "horse marines" had not begun to show out; and a proper "troop-ship" must have been as little known to Agamemnon as Havanna cigars, or as duelling pistols to Menelaus.

7. A seventh argument for the integrity of our pre-

sent "Iliad" in its main section, lies in the *nexus* of its subordinate parts. Every canto in this main section implies every other. Thus the funeral of Hector implies that his body had been ransomed. That fact implies the whole journey of Priam to the tents of Achilles. This journey, so fatiguing to the aged king, and in the compulsory absence of his body-guards, so alarming to a feeble old prince, implies the death and capture of Hector. For no calamity less than *that* could have prompted such an extreme step as a suppliant and perilous pilgrimage to the capital enemy of his house and throne. But how should Hector and Achilles have met in battle, after the wrathful vow of Achilles? That argues the death of Patroclus as furnishing the sufficient motive. But the death of Patroclus argues the death of Sarpedon, the Trojan ally, which it was that roused the vindictive fury of Hector. These events in their turn argue the previous success of the Trojans, which had moved Patroclus to interfere. And this success of the Trojans argues the absence of Achilles, which again argues the feud with Agamemnon. The whole of this story unfolds like a process of vegetation. And the close intertexture of the several parts is as strong a proof of unity in the design and execution, as the intense life and consistency in the conception of Achilles.

8. By an eighth argument, I meet the objection sometimes made to the transmission of the "Iliad," through the *rhapsodoi*, from the burden which so long a poem would have imposed upon the memory. Some years ago I published a paper on the Flight of the Kalmuck Tartars from Russia. Bergmann, the German from whom that account was chiefly drawn, resided for a long time amongst the Kalmucks, and had frequent opportunities of hearing musical recitations selected from the "Dschangæriade." This

is the great Tartar epic; and it extends to three hundred and sixty cantos, each averaging the length of a Homeric book. Now, it was an ordinary effort for a Tartar minstrel to master a score of these cantos, which amounts pretty nearly to the length of the "Iliad." But a case more entirely in point is found in a minor work of Xenophon's. A young man is there introduced as boasting that he could repeat by heart the whole of the "Iliad" and the "Odyssey"—a feat, by the way, which has been more than once accomplished by English schoolboys.* But the answer made to this young man is, that there is nothing at all extraordinary in that; for that every common *rhapsodos* could do as much. To me, indeed, the whole objection seems idle. The human memory is capable of far greater efforts; and the music would prodigiously lighten the effort. But, as it is an objection often started, we may consider it fortunate that we have such a passage as this in Xenophon, which not only illustrates the kind of qualification looked for in a *rhapsodos*, but shows also that such a class of people continued to practise in the generation subsequent to that of Pericles.

Upon these eight arguments I build. This is my case. They are amply sufficient for the purpose. Homer is not a person known to us separately and previously, concerning whom we are inquiring whether, in addition to what else we know of him, he did not also write the "Iliad." "Homer" means nothing else but the man who wrote the "Iliad." Somebody, you will say, must have written it. True; but, if that somebody should appear, by any probable argument, to have been a multitude of persons, there goes to wreck the unity which is essential to the

* In particular, by an Eton boy some forty years since, known extensively as *Homeric Wright*.

idea of a Homer. Now, this unity is sufficiently secured, if it should appear that a considerable section of the "Iliad"—and that section by far the most full of motion, of human interest, of tragical catastrophe, and through which runs, as the connecting principle, a character the most brilliant, magnanimous, and noble, that Pagan morality could conceive—was, and must have been, the work and conception of a single mind. Achilles revolves through that section of the "Iliad" in a series of phases, each of which looks forward and backward to all the rest. He travels like the sun through his diurnal course. We see him first of all rising upon us as a princely councillor for the welfare of the Grecian host. We see him atrociously insulted in this office; yet still, though a king, and unused to opposition, and boiling with youthful blood, nevertheless controlling his passion, and retiring in clouded majesty. Even thus, though having now so excellent a plea for leaving the army, and though aware of the early death that awaited him if he staid, he disdains to profit by the evasion. We see him still living in the tented field, and generously unable to desert those who had so insultingly deserted *him*. We see him in a dignified retirement, fulfilling all the duties of religion, friendship, hospitality; and, like an accomplished man of taste, cultivating the arts of peace. We see him so far surrendering his wrath to the earnest persuasion of friendship, that he comes forth at a critical moment for the Greeks to save them from ruin. What are his arms? He has none at all. Simply by his voice he changes the face of the battle. He shouts, and nations fly from the sound. Never but once again is such a shout recorded by a poet—

> "He call'd so loud, that all the hollow deep
> Of hell resounded."

Who called? *That* shout was the shout of an archangel. Next we see him reluctantly allowing his dearest friend to assume his own arms; the kindness and the modesty of his nature forbidding him to suggest, that not the divine weapons but the immortal arm of the wielder had made them invincible. His friend perishes. Then we see him rise in his noontide wrath, before which no life could stand. The frenzy of his grief makes him for a time cruel and implacable. He sweeps the field of battle like a monsoon. His revenge descends perfect, sudden, like a curse from heaven. We now recognise the goddess-born. This is his avatar—the incarnate descent of his wrath. Had he moved to battle under the ordinary impulses of Ajax, Diomed, and the other heroes, we never could have sympathised or gone along with so withering a course. We should have viewed him as a "scourge of God," or fiend, born for the tears of wives and the maledictions of mothers. But the poet, before he would let him loose upon men, creates for him a sufficient, or at least palliating motive. In the sternest of his acts, we read only the anguish of his grief. This is surely the perfection of art. At length the work of destruction is finished; but, if the poet leaves him at this point, there would be a want of repose, and we should be left with a painful impression of his hero as forgetting the earlier humanities of his nature, and brought forward only for final exhibition in his terrific phases. Now, therefore, by machinery the most natural, we see this paramount hero travelling back within our gentler sympathies, and revolving to his rest like the vesper sun disrobed of his blazing terrors. We see him settling down to that humane and princely character in which he had been first exhibited; we see him relenting at the sight of Priam's grey hairs, touched with the

sense of human calamity, and once again mastering his passion (grief now) as formerly he had mastered his wrath. He consents that his feud shall sleep; he surrenders the corpse of his capital enemy; and the last farewell chords of the poem rise with a solemn intonation from the grave of "Hector, the tamer of horses"—that noble soldier who had so long been the column of his country, and to whom, in his dying moments, the stern Achilles had declared—but then in the middle career of his grief—that no honourable burial should ever be granted.

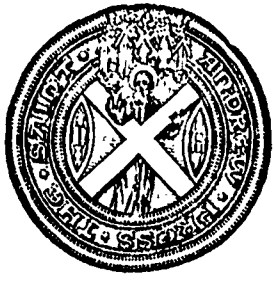
Such is the outline of an Achilleis, as it might be gathered from the "Iliad;" and for the use of schools, I am surprised that such a beautiful whole has not long since been extracted. A tale more affecting by its story and vicissitudes does not exist; and, after this, who cares in what order the *non-essential* parts of the poem may be arranged, or whether Homer was their author? It is sufficient that one mind must have executed this Achilleis, in consequence of its intense unity. Every part implies every other part. With such a model before him as this poem on the wrath of Achilles, Aristotle could not carry his notions of unity too high. And the unifying mind which could conceive and execute this Achilleis—that is what we mean by Homer. As well might it be said, that the parabola described by a cannon-ball was in one half due to a first discharge, and in the other half to a second, as that one poet could lay the preparations for the passion and sweep of such a poem, whilst another conducted it to a close. Creation does not proceed by instalments: the steps of its revolution are not successive, but simultaneous; and the last book of the Achilleis was undoubtedly conceived in the same moment as the first.

What effect such an Achilleis, abstracted from the "Iliad," would probably leave upon the mind, it happens that I can measure by my own childish experience. In Russell's "Ancient Europe," a book much used in the last century, there is an abstract of the "Iliad," which presents very nearly the outline of an Achilleis, such as I have sketched. The heroes are made to speak in a sort of stilted, or at least buskined language, not unsuited to a youthful taste; and from the close convergement of the separate parts, the interest is condensed. This book in my eighth year I read. It was my first introduction to the "Tale of Troy divine;" and I do not deceive myself in saying, that this memorable experience drew from me the first tears that ever I owed to a book; and by the stings of grief which it left behind, demonstrated its own natural pathos.

Whether the same mind conceived also the "Odyssey," is a separate question. I am myself strongly inclined to believe that the "Odyssey" belongs to a post-Homeric generation—to the generation of the *Nostoi*, or homeward voyages of the several Grecian chiefs. And with respect to all the burlesque or satiric poems ascribed to Homer, such as the "Batrachomyomachia," the "Margites," &c., the whole fiction seems to have arisen out of an uncritical blunder; they had been classed as Homeric poems—meaning by the word "Homeric," simply that they had a relation or reference to objects in which Homer was interested, which they certainly have. At least we may say this of the "Batrachomyomachia," which still survives, that it undoubtedly points to the "Iliad" as a mock-heroic parody upon its majestic forms and diction. In that sense it is Homeric—*i. e.*, it relates to Homer's poetry; it presupposes it as the basis of its own fun. But subsequent generations, careless and uncritical, understood the word

Homeric to mean, actually composed by Homer. How impossible this was, the reader may easily imagine to himself by the parallel case of our own parodies on Scripture. What opening for a parody could have arisen in the same age as that scriptural translation? "Howbeit," "peradventure," "lifted up his voice and wept," "found favour in thy sight"—phrases such as these have, to our modern feelings, a deep colouring of antiquity; placed, therefore, in juxtaposition with modern words or modern ideas, they produce a sense of contrast which is strongly connected with the ludicrous. But nothing of this result could possibly exist for those who first used these phrases in translation. The words were such as, in their own age, ranked as classical and proper. These were no more liable to associations of the ludicrous, than the serious style of our own age is at this moment. And on the same principle, in order to suppose the language of the "Iliad," as, for example, the solemn *formulæ* which introduce all the replies and rejoinders open to the ludicrous, they must, first of all, have had time to assume the sombre hues of antiquity. But even that is not enough: the "Iliad" must previously have become so popular, that a man might count with certainty upon his own ludicrous travesties, as applying themselves at once to a serious model, radicated in the universal feeling. Otherwise, to express the case mechanically, there is no resistance, and consequently no possibility of a rebound. Hence it is certain that the burlesques of the "Iliad" could not be Homeric, in the sense which an unlearned Grecian public imagined; and as to the satiric poem of the "Margites," it is contrary to all the tendencies of human nature, that a public sensibility to satire should exist, until the simple age of Homer had been supplanted by an age of large cities, and a complex

state of social refinement. Thus far I abjure, as monstrous moral anachronisms, the parodies and lampoons attributed to Homer. But finally, as regards the "Iliad," I hold that its noblest section has a perfect and separate unity; that so far, therefore, it was written by one man; that it was also written a thousand years before our Christian era; and that it has not been essentially altered. These are the elements which make up my compound meaning, when I assert the existence of Homer, in any sense interesting to modern ages. And for the affirmation of that question in that interesting sense, I presume myself to have offered perhaps more and weightier arguments than all which any German army of infidels has yet been able to muster against it.



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